COLLECTED WORKS OF ERASMUS

VOLUME 47

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COLLECTED WORKS OF ERASMUS

NEW TESTAMENT SCHOLARSHIP

General Editor Robert D. Sider

PARAPHRASE ON LUKE 1–10

translated and annotated by

Jane E. Phillips

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Preface

This volume completes the annotated translations of Erasmus' *Paraphrases* on the New Testament published in the Collected Works of Erasmus 42–50. It is appropriate to review briefly in this preface the shape our work has assumed and to indulge momentarily in an appreciative reflection on memorable high points in the Erasmian achievement.

In the preface to volume 42, the *Paraphrase on Romans and Galatians*, the first of the series to be published, we had outlined some of the salient features our readers should expect to find as they perused these volumes. As the publication of the volumes progressed, certain technical details were refined to facilitate reading. Word studies have become increasingly prevalent, and these in effect may now offer something of a glossary of the Erasmian hermeneutical language. Some words have been merely noted, others have been pursued relentlessly over the series, as the indexes of 'Greek and Latin Words Cited' will show, perhaps most notably *crassus*, but also *gratia*, *fides*, *iustus*, *mundus* 'world,' and others, each providing an analysis of crucial terms within a significant context. The efforts originating in volume 42 with the work of John B. Payne, Albert Rabil Jr, and Warren S. Smith Jr to place Erasmus' paraphrastic interpretations in the context of the hermeneutical tradition have generally been intensified in subsequent volumes;[1] likewise, efforts to place the paraphrastic interpretation within the context of Erasmus' own writings.

The collected editions of the *Paraphrases* were published by Froben in the customary Western canonical order of the New Testament, with the exception of the *Paraphrases* on the Catholic Epistles, which always appeared

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1 I have indicated in greater detail the important role of Payne, Rabil, and Smith in creating a foundation for the general conception of the volumes that contain the *Paraphrases* in 'The New Testament Scholarship of Erasmus in the Toronto Project' in *The Unfolding of Words: Commentary in the Age of Erasmus* ed Judith Rice Henderson, with the assistance of P.M. Swan (Toronto 2012) 86–98.

in their order of publication. In the preparation and publication of the original editions of the *Paraphrases*, however, Erasmus only partially observed the traditional canonical order: Romans came first, followed by the other Pauline Epistles, Timothy to Philemon appearing (on perhaps questionable grounds) just before Ephesians to Thessalonians, then the Catholic Epistles, and, significantly, Hebrews last of all. After the Epistles had been paraphrased, Erasmus began work on the Gospels, encouraged by Matthäus Schiner: Matthew first, then John, which was followed by Luke, finally Mark, and, last of all the *Paraphrases*, the book of Acts. Although the final decision to place the volumes in CWE in the chronological order of original publication came after the first assignments had been made, we have generally and with only a few exceptions been able to follow that order, to the profit, we believe, of our readers. The dedicatory letter was, with only two exceptions, always attached as an integral part to each *Paraphrase* or set of *Paraphrases* published; it was a letter that almost inevitably spoke acutely to the problems of the day, problems that were deeply persistent on the one hand but rapidly changing in focus on the other. To arrange the volumes as we have done is thus to set the *Paraphrases* symbolically in the context of their times, and so to add significance to the Erasmian endeavour.

The *Paraphrases* reflect, to be sure, a mentality representative of their sixteenth-century context, effecting a temporal distance from the modern reader, and there are some passages that may seem inherently tedious. But Erasmus' achievement must be marked rather by the multitude of images, ideas, and reconstructions of the biblical text, the appreciation of which transcends the limitations of time as these images and ideas are found in the *Paraphrases*. To sample just a few: in the Epistles, the powerful self-revealing voice of Paul in the paraphrase on Romans 1; in the paraphrase on 1 Corinthians 3 the amusing fictional names contrived to mock the monastic orders; the luminous clarification of the puzzling passages in Colossians 1 and 2 where the Apostle speaks of 'filling up the sufferings of Christ' and evokes the image of the 'record . . . nailed to the cross' (NRSV); the highly rhetorical expansion of the images of James 3 on the 'intemperate tongue'; and the sustained definition of the 'world' – that 'magician with tricks' – in 1 John 2. In the Gospels, we can indulge in a whole series of fascinating portraits: the church's Christ brought to recognizable life by his wonderful humanity (without loss of his divinity); the holy severity of John the Baptist; the winsome guilelessness of the Samaritan woman. Here too we will find the 'philosophy of Christ,' notably in the Sermon on the Mount, where the new philosophy goes pointedly beyond both classical thought and Jewish legalism. In the *Paraphrase on Acts* we are met almost immediately with an unforgettably vivid representation of sheer energy (for Erasmus that undeniable sign of authentic Christianity),

while one recognizes the message of Paul to the Athenians on the Areopagus as a faultless model of 'accommodation.'

I take this opportunity to express gratitude to each of the translators / annotators who have laboured long and hard to bring Erasmus' *Paraphrases* in a sympathetic and intelligible way to the English reading public. I may mention in particular and without partiality the work of Jane Phillips, who, with the paraphrases presented here on Luke 1–10, has authored three of the nine volumes. It is fitting to recognize the contribution of John J. Bateman, now deceased, and to recall with the fondest memory the enormous and creative role played by the late Ronald Schoeffel.

RDS

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Translator's Note

The present volume of the Collected Works of Erasmus, containing the *Paraphrase on Luke 1–10*, appears more than a decade after publication of CWE 48, the *Paraphrase on Luke 11–24*. The Translator's Note in that volume sketches the original plan for preparation of this *Paraphrase*, the longest in Erasmus' whole set of New Testament *Paraphrases*: its division into two parts with the assignment of two collaborating translators / annotators, and the circumstances behind the publication of the second part before preparation of the first could be expected. Since then ongoing ferment in academic life made the planned collaboration no longer feasible and delayed the efforts of the remaining translator / annotator to complete this volume in a more timely fashion. But completed the volume is; its publication marks the conclusion of the set of Erasmus' New Testament *Paraphrases*, CWE volumes 42–50, and presages the imminent appearance of CWE 41, the prefatory volume to the whole set, prepared by Robert D. Sider, CWE's general editor of Erasmus' New Testament Scholarship. The reader of the *Paraphrase on Luke* is heartily recommended to consult that volume for an analysis of Erasmus' hermeneutic and pastoral principles as revealed in his works generally, and for a description of the historical and biographical context in which his biblical scholarship was carried out.

The Translator's Note to CWE 48, the artificially constructed 'second half' of the *Paraphrase on Luke*, contains several pages (ix–xiv) on the principles of translation and annotation used there, with some comments on the texts used and the general practices observed in CWE volumes. Since what is said there is equally applicable to this volume, those pages are reproduced here.

In August 1523, barely eight months after the publication of the *Paraphrase on John*, the Froben press in Basel published the first edition of the *Paraphrase on Luke*. Three more editions, lightly corrected, appeared during Erasmus' lifetime as part of Froben's re-editions of the complete *Paraphrases*

in 1524, 1534, and 1535.[1] Following the practice of CWE, the text translated here is that of 1535, the last one to which Erasmus himself is likely to have made corrections and additions. The annotations will show where this text or the earlier editions diverge significantly from that reprinted in the seventh volume of the *Opera omnia* published by Jean Leclerc (Johannes Clericus) in Leiden in 1703–6.

Translation is an exercise in accommodation to the source text and to the readers. This translation endeavours to reproduce in English something of the effect of Erasmus' paraphrasing Latin – now swift and colloquial; now profoundly biblical in quotation, near-quotation, or improvisation; now echoing the pagan classics, which he and at least a portion of his readership read for the quality of their Latin and their insight into human nature. Sometimes Erasmus' longer sentences, more complex than modern English readers are accustomed to, have been broken up. But breaking up a long sentence while simultaneously retaining the emphasis of each of its parts can make a long Latin sentence into a tedious English paragraph. Some long sentences have been retained, though I attempt to render them in a way that makes them absorbable, especially if they are read aloud and with attention to the punctuation. Vocabulary too, especially the vocabulary of terms important in theology and religious practice, cannot always be transferred simply, since each language and even each religious group among users of the same language has its own sense of what sounds 'right.' In this volume I have tended to translate *servus* as 'slave' rather than 'servant,' since it more clearly names the status of *servi* in Luke's time, whose voice Erasmus is claiming to reproduce; *sermo* is usually 'word' rather than 'conversation,' because Erasmus took *sermo* to be a better translation of λόγος than *verbum* 'word' in the opening of the Gospel of John, and English speakers are most familiar with 'Word' as the theological concept so designated. *Evangelicus* is translated as the adjective 'gospel' rather than 'evangelical.' *Pius* is usually 'godly' and *impius* 'godless,' 'ungodly,' or 'unholy'; only rarely are they 'pious' and 'impious.' For discussion of the meanings of *sermo* 'word,' *fides* and *fiducia* 'faith,' *resipiscere* 'repent,' *crassus* 'dull-witted,' 'thickheaded,' *dominus* 'lord,' and other terms with important religious resonances, see the Index of Greek and Latin Words Cited, and for other choices or further discussions, see the translators' notes and indexes of Greek and Latin words in other volumes of the *Paraphrases*.

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1 For the whole history of the publication of the *Paraphrases*, see the essay by R.A.B. Mynors 'The Publication of the Latin *Paraphrases*' CWE 42 xx–xxix.

Erasmus himself saw the advisability of accommodating his paraphrase on Holy Scripture both to the expectations of his readers and to his own judgment, informed by study of the Greek text and by a thorough knowledge of good Latin usage, about what the correct Greek sense of a given passage was and how it should be expressed in Latin. The nature of amplifying paraphrase lends itself to accommodation in both directions.[2] In many places where his scholarly *Annotations* on the New Testament defended alterations and additions to, and subtractions from, the Vulgate familiar to his readers, the *Paraphrases* still employed the familiar words, even when they also presented the meaning of Erasmus' reformed text. Such places are signalled in the notes.

In general the annotation in this volume attempts to depict for the reader the intellectual context of the *Paraphrase*, focused roughly in four areas. The first shows how Erasmus drew on his familiarity with the Greek and Roman classics and with Scripture in order to add character to this Gospel's setting in historical time and to its narrator,[3] and in order to hone the Latin in which he portrayed it. As he says at the close of Ep 1381, the prefatory letter to Henry VIII, the purpose of paraphrasing was to season the food of the gospel so that it could be read with greater ease and profit.

The second area of annotation is concerned with how Erasmus situated himself in the mainstream of more than a thousand years of exegesis in interpreting Jesus' life and words. The intent is to illustrate how Erasmus' interpretations in general align themselves with the tradition of exegesis that, chiefly from his remarks in letters, in works like the *Ratio verae theologiae*, and especially in the *Annotations*, we know he read and valued.[4] Among Christian classics of exegesis Ambrose and Bede on the Latin side, and Cyril of Alexandria and Theophylact on the Greek, had written continuous commentaries on Luke; there were also Jerome's continuous commentary and John Chrysostom's sermon series on Matthew to help out where the two

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2 For discussion of Erasmus' purposes and methods in writing the *Paraphrases*, see 'The *Paraphrases* of Erasmus: Origin and Character' CWE 42 xi–xix and the translators' notes in other CWE translations of the *Paraphrases*.

3 For two analyses of Erasmus' characterization of Luke the narrator throughout this paraphrase, see Jane E. Phillips '"Sub Evangelistae Persona": The Speaking Voice in Erasmus' *Paraphrase on Luke*' and Irena Backus 'Jesus and His Family in Erasmus' Paraphrases on Luke and John' in *Holy Scripture Speaks: The Production and Reception of Erasmus' Paraphrases on the New Testament* ed Hilmar Pabel and Mark Vessey (Toronto 2002) 127–74.

4 Cf Erika Rummel *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: From Philologist to Theologian* Erasmus Studies 8 (Toronto 1986) 52–74 for the subject in general. What is said there of the *Annotations* logically applies to the *Paraphrases* as well.

Gospels were telling versions of the same story. In addition there were other sources that, while not restricted to examination of this Gospel, contained important material devoted to parts of it: Augustine's *De consensu evangelistarum* and *Quaestiones evangeliorum*, and his *Sermones de scripturis*, Gregory the Great's XL *Homiliae*, and other works. But the sermons on Luke by Origen, a writer for whom Erasmus had the highest respect, were not well preserved and in any case did not pay much attention to the second half of the Gospel. The commentary on Luke by Cyril of Alexandria, another writer Erasmus esteemed highly, was certainly known to him not in its entirety but from excerpts in the *Catena aurea* of Thomas Aquinas, and perhaps also from excerpts in Greek catenae like those from which its text in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* was later reconstructed.[5]

Medieval treatment of biblical exegesis, intended mostly for the schooling of clerics and members of religious communities, relied heavily on excerpts from earlier work. Excerpting and arranging others' ideas to serve newly emergent purposes or circumstances can be itself an expression of the excerptor's ideas, but it can also be – perhaps more often is – a deformation of its originals. Bede, late in the Latin patristic tradition, already contains a high proportion of material quoted verbatim or summarized from earlier exegetes. Theophylact, well into medieval times, is largely a digest of Chrysostom and other Greek Fathers. Thomas Aquinas' *Catena aurea* is a broad-ranging compilation of earlier comment from a variety of exegetical sources on the four Gospels, arranged to follow the narrative in each one. Similar in conception and arrangement though much briefer and more narrowly focused are the medieval *Gloss*, in interlinear and marginal

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5 The 'commentary' (*explanatio* in PG 72) in fact was a series of sermons. In Byzantine times the full Greek texts were neglected in favour of excerpts in catenae ('chains' or anthologies of exegetical material) on the Gospel of Luke, from which Angelo Cardinal Mai made a reconstruction in the mid-nineteenth century. It seems most likely that only the Greek catenae or selections from them in the *Catena aurea* would have been available to anyone in Western Europe in Erasmus' day. Thus Cyril will be cited in the notes according to Mai's text in PG 72, with references also to the versions in the *Catena aurea* where these parallel or supplement that text. The shortcomings of Mai's text in the light of later discoveries are well known but probably do not affect comparison of Cyril's exegesis with Erasmus' work. See Johannes Quasten *Patrology* III*: The Golden Age of Greek Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicaea to the Council of Chalcedon* (Utrecht / Antwerp 1960) 123–4, Mai's preface in PG 68 97–8, and the discussion of the Byzantine catenae Mai used by Adolf Rücker *Die Lukas-Homilien des hl. Cyrill von Alexandrien: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Exegese* (Breslau 1911) 14–32.

forms, and the running commentaries of Nicholas of Lyra and Hugh of St Cher.[6] Erasmus knew all of these and others as well, as the *Annotations* show. In his mature thinking the medieval derivatives paled in comparison with the work of the original authors, yet they would have been his first introduction to their sources.

Citing patristic and medieval commentaries in these notes, it should be remembered, is intended to demonstrate where Erasmus parallels their thought and to suggest that these materials as a whole are likely to be his sources. But, with a few exceptions, the notes do not claim to describe definitively what his exact sources in each instance were or how he employed each one in his theological and pastoral undertaking. Much work remains to be done in this area of Erasmus studies.

Third, the notes point to parallels of thought and topic in other of Erasmus' own writings, especially those that are earlier than or clustered around the time when this *Paraphrase* was composed. His *Annotations* on the New Testament are most important here. Since the text of the *Paraphrase* was nearly unaltered throughout its publishing history in Erasmus' lifetime, while the *Annotations* grew considerably over their five editions (1516, 1519, 1522, 1527, and 1535, revised and reprinted simultaneously with new editions of Erasmus' revision of the Vulgate New Testament with Greek text), the 1522 *Annotations*, the ones that immediately precede the appearance of this *Paraphrase*, are the touchstone of these notes.

Fourth, the notes address one area that extends beyond 1523 and the initial publication of the *Paraphrase*. Erasmus' biblical scholarship, and in particular, since they addressed a general reading public, the *Paraphrases*, were subjected to intense criticism by conservative theologians during his lifetime. The *Paraphrase on Luke* came in for a good part of the objections expressed in print by the Paris faculty of theology. They were answered, also in print, by Erasmus over the ten years following the appearance of the *Paraphrase*.[7] His responses, together with the criticisms as he summarized them, are reported in the notes.

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6 For details on these see eg the ODCC and, for the Latin side, Beryl Smalley *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford 1983). In the notes in this volume, 'the *Gloss*' without further specification means the marginal *Gloss*.

7 See the history of the controversies, in particular about the *Paraphrases*, by Erika Rummel *Erasmus and His Catholic Critics II: 1523–36* (Nieuwkoop 1989) and Edwin Rabbie 'Twenty-ninth Annual Erasmus Birthday Lecture: Long and Useless: The Polemic between Erasmus and Béda' ERSY 30 (2010) 7–21.

References in the notes to the text of the Gospel of Luke, in every instance except where confusion could occur, appear only as chapter and verse, without 'Luke' preceding. Following CWE practice, the standard text of the Bible for book titles, chapter and verse numbering, and for unproblematical text is the Revised Standard Version (RSV). Where appropriate the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the King James (or Authorized) Version (AV), and the Douay-Rheims translation (DV) have been consulted. Italicized dates, such as *1523*, are shorthand references to the edition of the Erasmian work under discussion.

For the reader of this volume the best guide to the *Paraphrase* is the Gospel of Luke itself, preferably in an edition well cross-referenced to the rest of the Bible. The volume's General Index covers in the first instance the material of the annotation as just described. Since the notes document in considerable detail parallels to Erasmus' explications from the Lucan commentaries of Cyril, Ambrose, Bede, Theophylact, the *Gloss*, the *Catena aurea*, Nicholas of Lyra, and Hugh of St Cher, individual references to their comments on the verse or verses being paraphrased are omitted from the Index, as are references to corresponding passages in Erasmus' *Annotations on Luke*. Where Erasmus has amplified his source text, however, in a way not readily deducible from a literal reading of the relevant Gospel passage, the Index does refer directly to the *Paraphrase*.

The text of the *Paraphrase* lifetime editions and of the 1522 *Annotations* was taken from photocopies of Froben editions provided by CWE. For the *Paraphrase*, comparisons with variants in the Leiden edition of 1703–6 (LB) are made regularly in the notes, since that is the edition of the Latin text most likely to be available (at this date) to interested readers. As for the *Annotations*, the critical edition of the *Annotations* on Matthew, Mark, and Luke, published as volume VI-5 of the Amsterdam edition (ASD), contains extensive documentation of sources and alterations in the *Annotations* and comparisons with the textual history of Erasmus' own re-editing of the Vulgate New Testament, and it is warmly recommended to readers interested in pursuing such questions.[8]

Over the years invaluable resources have been provided by the University of Kentucky Libraries, the Special Collections Department of the Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Divinity Library of Duke University, the Library of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto, and the Library of Lexington Theological Seminary,

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8 A complete list of abbreviations and their expansions appears in the Works Frequently Cited at the end of this volume.

and through academic cooperation in the form of interlibrary loans. I am grateful beyond words to Alan Reese of St Thomas More College in the University of Saskatchewan for preparing a meticulous collation of the four editions of the first ten chapters of the the *Paraphrase* for my use; to my many colleagues in Classics and History at the University of Kentucky and elsewhere for their generous help with difficult questions; and above all to the community of Erasmians whose centre is at the University of Toronto Press and who have steadily provided encouragement, assistance, and fellowship. That the manuscript is at last a book is owing to the diligence of its copyeditor, Carla De Santis.

JEP

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PARAPHRASE ON LUKE 1–10

Paraphrasis in Lucam 1–10

DEDICATORY LETTER

TO THE MOST INVINCIBLE KING OF ENGLAND AND FRANCE, LORD OF IRELAND, DEFENDER OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH, HENRY, EIGHTH OF THAT NAME, FROM ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM, GREETING[1]

I send you Luke the physician, most noble king – no different from him you had before, but speaking now to Latin ears more clearly and more fully.[2] Nor do I think that at this point I need to take trouble to satisfy those who are always dinning into us the excellent principle, handed down by men of long experience, that in making presents it ought to be our first concern that what we give should be appropriate. I followed this rule not long ago when dedicating Matthew to the emperor Charles;[3] and before my time it had been shown by eminent scholars on the authority of ancient custom that any subject can properly be dedicated to princes. Even if we know that they will never read what is presented to them, the presentation has this good result, that the work is recommended to the interest of the learned public by their distinguished names; for there is a point in Pliny's remark that certain works of art are highly thought of solely because they stand as offerings in temples.[4] Now there are people so difficult to please in regard to newly written books that they reject them before sampling their quality; and thus the author loses the profit he hoped for and the reader the benefit that should be his. Such critics will concede this much at least to the style and title of the greatest princes printed on a volume's opening page: they cannot condemn it, spurn it, spit upon it before they have read it. Though in any case the piety of certain princes means that he does nothing patently ridiculous who sends a Gospel as a present to a king. I have been told by men of no mean authority that the emperor Charles gladly devotes to a volume of the Gospels such leisure as is allowed him in this time of public turmoil, and that the

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1 The text of this letter is, with one exception, as it appears in CWE 10; there are four new notes and four additions to notes marked with JEP at the end. The address of this letter to Henry VIII sparked protest from Noël Béda, syndic of the Paris faculty of theology, for the inclusion of 'and France' among Henry's royal titles. The objectionable words were dropped in editions after *1524*. Erasmus defended their historical correctness and cited the practice of Bishop John Fisher as a precedent in his 1526 *Divinationes* LB IX 489D–E. (JEP)

2 Béda also found fault with the opening sentence of the letter, apparently on the ground that it asserts departure from the language of Scripture. Erasmus notes in reply that any translator does the same thing, but neither he nor a translator intends to alter the meaning; *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 489D–E. (JEP)

3 See Ep 1255:95–111.

4 *Naturalis historia* preface 19

illustrious prince Ferdinand his brother is often seen with the paraphrase on John, which I lately dedicated to him,[5] in his hands; while that distinguished king Christian of Denmark,[6] as you yourself are in a position to know,[7] frequently has in his hands a Christian book, and is a keen reader of my paraphrase on Matthew. Why therefore should it be thought foolish to send a Gospel to those who read and love the gospel, which ought to be familiar to all those at any rate who bear in mind that they are Christians? And although human reason tells us that as far as possible we should give the gift of which the recipient is most in need, yet according to the gospel principle we should give to him that hath, that he may abound.[8]

And so I thought I should be doing something most appropriate, if I were to send you this physician of the gospel, for you are so free from any distaste for sacred literature that your proficiency in it is actually above the average,[9] as your own writings bear witness;[10] so that he who offers you anything of this kind seems not so much to make you a present as to repay what we all owe you. And what of your most noble consort,[11] a unique example in our age of true religion, who with a distaste for the things of no account that women love devotes a good part of her day to holy reading? – reading a lesson in their duty to all other princes' ladies, who waste the greatest part of their time in painting their faces or in games of chance and similar amusements, and at the same time putting to shame for our idleness, or rather our impiety, those of us who spend the greatest part of our lives on pagan literature. Indeed, if special care is taken to provide the courts of monarchs with a regular supply of learned and experienced physicians of unquestioned loyalty to take care of the king's bodily health, how much more appropriate that Luke the physician should be a familiar figure there, not to keep his body in good health with scammony or hellebore, but with heavenly medicines to free his mind from the sickness that perforce leads on to eternal death!-and this means ignorance of the truth, lack of faith in God, love of this world,

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5 Ep 1333
6 Christian II, king of Denmark and Sweden, brother-in-law of Charles V (Ep 1228 n6), had taken refuge in the Netherlands in April 1523 after being expelled from both his kingdoms by his rebellious subjects.
7 King Christian and Queen Isabella had visited England in late June–early July 1523; *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII* ed J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R.H. Brodie (London 1867) 3: 3075, 3141–2, 3153, 3155, 3165–6.
8 Matt 13:12, 25:29; Mark 4:25; Luke 8:18, 19:26
9 See Epp 964:129–41, 1313:80–5.
10 See Ep 1275 n25.
11 Catherine of Aragon (Ep 1313 n12)

ambition, avarice, dissipation, hatred, envy. These are the diseases to which the whole life of mortals is exposed, as the apostle John says, lamenting that the whole world is in evil case and is dominated by nothing save the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life.[12] And the greatest princes are more at risk from these diseases for this reason, because fortune is more indulgent to them and they have the freedom to do what they please.

It seems to me then that I shall not waste my time if I spend a few words in recommending to you first Luke the physician and then the medicine that he brings with him, although I do not doubt that neither, as is right and proper, needs any recommendation to a religious person like yourself. This is, to be sure, the famous Luke who was a native of Antioch. The city of Antioch was in olden time so famous and powerful that it gave its name to that part of Syria which border on Cilicia, and in one respect it was more fortunate even than Rome itself: this was the place where Peter prince of the apostles first held the see, and it was here that Paul and Barnabas first assumed the honour of their apostolic office. He was friendly with all the apostles, but in particular a follower of Paul, and in fact his sole companion on his journeys. On the basis of his familiar acquaintance with the apostles he wrote his Gospel, and as an eyewitness of Paul's activity he wrote the book which he called Acts of the Apostles. This story he brought down to the second year of Paul's stay in Rome, which was the fourth year of the emperor Nero, and hence it is supposed that the book was written in that city. There is a general agreement among the learned that he is the man so often mentioned by Paul the apostle in his Epistles, for instance in the second letter to the Corinthians, ' we have sent also with him our brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches.'[13] Again, writing to the Colossians, Luke the beloved physician greets you.'[14] Again, in his second Epistle to Timothy, 'Demas hath forsaken me, loving this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia; only Luke is with me.'[15] There is also an ancient tradition that whenever Paul calls the gospel 'his,' as in the Epistle to Timothy 'Remember that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, being of the seed of David, according to my gospel,'[16] he is thinking of the Gospel of Luke, because Luke is thought to have written his gospel narrative on Paul's authority, as Mark did on Peter's.

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12 1 John 2:15–17
13 2 Cor 8:18
14 Col 4:14
15 2 Tim 4:10–11
16 2 Tim 2:8; also Rom 2:16, 16:25

Jerome thinks Luke had a better knowledge of Greek than the others,[17] and that was why he put his historical narrative together more precisely, beginning with the conception of John the Baptist and recording in some detail the birth and infancy of Jesus and some facts about his childhood, together with many parables and miracles which the others omitted from a desire for brevity. And while none of the others went beyond the time of our Lord's ascension into heaven, he alone pursued the story of the birth and growth of the church in a second volume. They add a further point, that while Matthew wrote his Gospel and Peter his Epistles for the Jews in particular, Luke wrote his Gospel particularly for the Gentiles, being of course a disciple of Paul, who as a teacher of the Gentiles wrote to Gentiles all his Epistles except for one to the Hebrews, the authorship of which has always been in doubt.[18] He wrote after Mark and before John, so that a disciple takes precedence of an apostle. Lastly, as befits a physician, he is said to have been long-lived. For he took Paul's advice, who wrote that it is good not to touch a wife,[19] and lived unmarried to the age of eighty-four. His bones after his death were translated from Achaia to Constantinople together with the relics of the apostle Andrew in the twentieth year of Constantius.[20]

Here then is a physician turned physician[21] recommended by his close friendship with the apostles, praised by the apostle Paul in more than one place, and approved by the unanimous verdict of all the churches. For while many men's gospels were rejected, his was accepted by general agreement, so that he completed that sacred and mystical number four indicated originally by Moses when he told us of the four rivers that well up out of a single

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17 *Commentarii in Esaiam* 3.6.9–10 CCL 73:91–2

18 Erasmus did not raise the question in the preface to his paraphrase on Hebrews (Ep 1181), but he had already expressed his opinion in Ep 1171:9-12.; cf CWE 44 212 n3. Here Béda objected to the assertion that Paul was not the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews; Erasmus replied in *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 489E that the authorship of Hebrews had long been suspect, as he had said in more than one place, and elaborated the same point in the 1527 *Supputatio* Prop 45 LB IX 594D–595A. (JEP)

19 1 Cor 7:1

20 Constantius II (d 361), created caesar in 324 by his father, Constantine the Great, became ruler of the eastern part of the Empire on his father's death in 337·

21 'Habes medicum ex medico . . .' A rather obscure play on words that makes sense if one follows Allen's suggestion that 'medicum' should be understood to mean 'medicum evangelicum,' the appellation that Erasmus had used in line 39. Thus Erasmus is saying: 'Here then is a physician turned into a physician of the gospel.'

fount in paradise,[22] which water the whole earth, and afterwards beheld by Ezekiel when he depicts the four mystic beasts and the four wheels in one wheel.[23]

And now allow me to say a few words about the medicine which he has provided for us. Hippocrates[24] had been his customary source for physic with which to relieve the ills of the body; but it was from the apostles who had seen and heard Christ, or rather from the Holy Spirit himself, that he obtained the remedy with which to heal our minds. Among physicians in ancient times a certain sort of most sovereign remedy was in use, skilfully compounded of different ingredients much sought after, which they called θεῶν χεῖρας, the hands of the gods;[25] but no drug has yet been discovered by the physicians which can cure all the diseases of the body, however much they may boast of that famous *panacea*[26] which, they claim, was so powerful and yet is quite unknown. Old age, at least, is a disease that yields to no prescription. But here we have in truth the hand of God, which by the agency of a true faith does away once and for all with all diseases of the spirit and, what God alone can do, confers immortality.

And there is some point in the old Greek proverb that words are the physicians of a troubled mind.[27] There have been people who thought that diseases of the body could be driven away by some fixed form of words that had magic power. Our Lord Jesus was a physician who, while he lived on earth, drove out with a word diseases of the body, however desperate or of long standing, and with a word brought the dead back to life; for this was no magic formula, but the omnipotent word of the almighty Father. He also puts to flight with a word diseases of the spirit, when he says, 'My son, thy

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22 Gen 2:10–14

23 Ezek 1:5–21

24 The ancient Greek physician (c 460–c 357 BC), to whom a considerable body of works on all branches of medicine was attributed

25 Cf *Adagia* I iii 6.

26 In ancient and medieval times, the term *panacea* (heal-all) was applied to a variety of herbs to which were ascribed the power to heal all diseases. See, for example, Pliny *Naturalis historia* 25.30–3. (The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites this passage in Nicholas Udall's translation of the Luke paraphrase [1548] as the earliest use of the term *panacea* in an English text.)

27 Cf *Adagia* III i 100. 'To a sick spirit speech is a physician'; in the version of the adage here, and in every following instance of what is translated 'word' in this paragraph (excepting only 'form of words' [*verbis*]), Erasmus uses *sermo*, his preferred translation for the λόγος in John 1:1. See chapter 1 n10 below. (JEP)

sins are forgiven thee'[28] and 'Go in peace; thy faith hath made thee whole.'[29] In fact, prophecy too had promised that Christ should be a physician; for it says in the book of Wisdom, 'For it was neither herb nor poultice that healed them, but thy word, O Lord, that healeth all things. '[30] This, we may be sure, is the true panacea. A psalm too, full of hidden meaning, has the words 'He sent his word and healed them out of their destruction.'[31] The Father's living word is Christ. He had sent Moses and the prophets, and by them the nation of the Jews was tended but not healed. The Father's word alone had power to heal the diseases of men, and not less serious diseases only but also those which cause death. The deadly diseases you can recognize, when the prophet[32] adds 'out of their destruction.' When the digestion has sunk so low that it refuses and rejects all food, the patient is at death's door. Such was the sickness from which the whole world suffered before the arrival of the heavenly Physician, as the psalmist had said shortly before: 'Their soul abhorred all manner of meats; they drew nigh even unto the gates of death.'[33]

Different drugs had been compounded by the philosophers, Pythagoreans, Academics, Stoics, Epicureans, Peripatetics, who promised spiritual health and happiness as well. Many were compounded by Moses, who prescribed various religious ceremonies, and many by the prophets; but the diseases got worse, and the medicine did no good – it only increased the disease and made it obvious. The digestion of the spirit was poisoned by distorted appetites, as if by noxious humours, and rejected the elaborate precepts of the philosophers; the prescriptions of Moses made men more superstitious, but no better. The bitter rebukes of the prophets had an unpleasant taste, and their promises were not believed. Beholding this, our heavenly Father, who wishes nothing to perish out of all that he has made, sent forth his Word, to free men one and all by heavenly medicine from all diseases of the spirit, granted only that we recognize we are ill and have faith in our Physician.[34] We know how friendly physicians, if ever they cannot be in constant attendance on the sick, often leave some medicine with which the

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28 Luke 5:20; also Matt 9:2, Mark 2:5
29 Luke 8:48; also Matt 9:22, Mark 5:34
30 Wisd 16:12
31 Ps 107 (Vulgate 106):20
32 Ie, David; cf Epp 1324:86–7, 1334:903.
33 Ps 107 (Vulgate 106):18
34 Here Béda suspected something Erasmus could not quite identify, perhaps an implicit dismissal of good works in the process of salvation, ie a Lutheran-like claim for *sola fides*. In *Divinationes* LB IX 489F–490A Erasmus strongly denies implying any such thing; he suggests that Béda's objection was possibly to *sermo*

patient can be his own physician, should the case so require; and in the same way the Lord Jesus, when he returned to heaven, left for us in the hands of his apostles the medicine of the gospel, simple itself and within the reach of everyone, but effective if taken as it ought to be; and to take it to good purpose, the most important thing is confidence in the Physician. Nor will a taste suffice; it must pass into the organs, that it may be absorbed by the stomach, and diffuse its power all through the veins. Only then does it begin to agitate the whole man with hatred of his former life; but these convulsions are followed by great peace of spirit.

Physicians of the body have pharmacists and druggists as auxiliaries in their art, while they themselves prescribe what should be given to the patient. In the same way, it is Christ alone who prescribed the remedy that brings eternal health; the apostles and their successors the bishops are only the auxiliaries: they mix, they grind, they administer drugs not of their making but Christ's; they bathe with water, but it is Christ who washes the spirit clean; they teach what Christ handed down to them, but it is Christ himself who makes the words effective. Physicians of the body often differ, both in their judgment of diseases and in the remedies they prescribe; and sometimes even, instead of remedies, they prescribe poison, as the Greek poet says: 'Good drugs in plenty mixed, and deadly too.'[35] But the medicine of the gospel knows one prescription only, which ought not to be corrupted or altered by any mortal man. Last but not least, it is a simple one, so that, if those whose duty it was to administer this drug are slow to act, any man can take it for himself, provided he has a faithful and true heart and is eager to get well. For even the supreme Physician, who alone can heal the whole man, sometimes gave people health himself, and sometimes by the hands of the apostles and disciples.

Again, the whole art of the physician has two aims in particular: the first is to free the body from disease and from its causes, and this division they call the therapeutic art; the other, to maintain good health and give fresh bodily vigour, and their foundation for this is the theory of regimen. Physicians are not always using cautery or the knife, they are not forever pouring in scammony to reduce the vigour of the body, almost killing that they may give life; sometimes they administer cordials to warm the heart, and even allow a sympathetic diet. So it is with us: first we are given a draught of faith, which

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instead of *verbum* for 'word.' He elaborates both replies in *Supputatio* Prop 46 LB IX 595F–596E and the 1532 *Declarationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 884A–885B. (JEP)

35 Homer *Odyssey* 4.230

administers to the spirit a salutary shock of repentance and reduces us and unburdens us of our sins. Then a potion is added of comfort, encouragement, and more advanced instruction. For if a physician, after reducing a patient's bodily state, were suddenly to abandon him, there is a risk that, while he is thus emptied out and deprived of his natural forces, some more severe sickness may attack him, paralysis for example or apoplexy or consumption. In the same way, when repentance has laid us low and our sickness has been driven out and baptism has left us emptied of our sins, treatment is then applied which is capable of replenishing in a health-giving way the spirit that is now well and truly empty. Anger is drawn off, and gentleness and mildness are instilled. Envy is drawn off, and a readiness to think well of all men takes its place. Greed is drawn off, and generosity substituted for it. The love of fighting is drawn off and succeeded by a passion for peace. Desire for the pleasures of the flesh is drawn off and succeeded by desire for heavenly things.

Do you wish to hear the scammony of the gospel? Repent. 'Now the axe is laid unto the root of the tree.'[36] And 'every tree that beareth not good fruit is cut down.'[37] St Paul again: 'Mortify your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence, and avarice.'[38] And thereafter: 'Stripping yourselves of the old man with all his actions.'[39] He has emptied the patient; now how does he fill him again? 'Put on,' he says, 'as the holy and elect people of God, the bowels of mercy, kindliness, humility, modesty, patience, bearing one another in tum and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against his fellow, even as the Lord has forgiven you. But above all things have this charity, which is the bond of perfection, and may the peace of Christ abound in your hearts.'[40] A house like this swept clean with brooms and filled on every side with such ornaments as this will not be occupied a second time by an evil spirit, returning with seven others worse than himself.[41] Thus the medicine of the gospel has wine of its own to scour away the corrupting matter from our wounds. 'Get thee behind me, Satan, for you are wise not in the things of God but the things of men'[42] – that

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36 Luke 3:9; Matt 3:10
37 Matt 7:19
38 Col 3:5
39 Col 3:9
40 Col 3:12–15
41 Luke 11:24–6; Matt 12:43–5
42 Matt 16:23; Mark 8:33

is its wine. Now hear its oil: "Trust in me, for I have overcome the world.'[43] 'A hair of your head shall not perish.'[44] 'Fear not, little flock, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.'[45] Paul has food with which he builds up those who are newly converted to Christ, that they may not slip back into sickness while they are still weak; he has also food of more solid kind with which to keep up the strength of those who are making progress continually towards the measure of the fullness of Christ. Those men had gained strength of whom it is written in the Acts of the Apostles: 'They went out rejoicing from the presence of the council, because they had been found worthy to suffer false accusation for the name of Jesus.'[46] He had gained strength who said 'I can do all things in him who makes me strong.'[47] And so the Lord Jesus in the gospel exhorts men to eat the bread which has come down from heaven, the eating of which congers immortal life.[48] He exhorts them to eat his flesh and to drink his blood,[49] thinking of his teaching, which like bread makes the spirit active and robust and like strong wine intoxicates it until it despises this life; like flesh offers solid nourishment and like blood offers living force. But though all Holy Scripture has a healing power, yet there is no drug in it more powerful than the Gospels. It is the same Spirit in them all, but this is where he wished particularly to exercize his power, that there might be no difference between the servants and their Lord, between the cisterns and the fountain.

And it is worth while to consider what the power of this drug is. A commonwealth is a kind of body. Its pests and diseases are the forms of moral evil, against which men of outstanding wisdom in different countries have applied laws as a sort of remedy – Solon for instance in Athens,[50] Lycurgus

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43 John 16:33
44 Luke 21:18
45 Luke 12:32
46 Acts 5:41
47 Phil 4:13. Béda here objected to the Latin *qui me fortem reddit* 'who makes me strong' because the Vulgate had *me confortat* 'who strengtheneth me' (DV, AV). Erasmus had preferred the more classical expression for the late Latin *confortat* and had used it in his own NT. In the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 490A–B he points out the long tradition of variation, with no change in meaning, in biblical quotation observed in the church Fathers. In his *Paraphrase on Philippians* he used yet another expression; CWE 43 390 with n13. (JEP)
48 John 6:51, 58
49 John 6:53–7
50 In 594 BC, Solon, the Athenian poet, businessman, and politician, was appointed archon and invested with unlimited power to heal the civil strife that had plagued Athens. He introduced sweeping political and constitutional reforms and issued a new and humane code of law.

among the Lacedaemonians,[51] Minos in Crete,[52] and the *decemviri* in ancient Rome.[53] None of these however could secure that the code he had established should be adopted by other nations too. Nor did any of them even attempt this, for fear that besides the waste of effort he might acquire a reputation for impudence for his pains. Solon persuaded one city to adopt his laws by ten years of exile.[54] Plato, a man of great learning and great eloquence as well, never persuaded the Athenians to accept his code.[55] And yet it is beyond doubt that they were all convinced of the truth of the laws they had drafted, and would have liked to see them adopted, had it been possible, by the whole world. Even the laws of Moses did not spread beyond one nation, although the Pharisees with their great ambitions hunted successfully for a certain number of proselytes.[56] Last but not least, even the all-powerful authority of the Roman emperors could not secure by force that their laws should have weight in all nations alike. What they tried to do by the publication of their codes was also attempted by the philosophers by publishing their principles with consummate wisdom and great pains. Yet none of them was eloquent or learned enough to convert any one nation, so weak and ineffectual was the power of the drug they had to offer.

Unlike all else, the truth of the gospel seized, permeated and conquered within a few years every region the whole world over, attracting Greeks and barbarians, learned and unlearned, common folk and kings. So effective as a medicine was this new truth that all those thousands of men left their ancestral laws, abandoned the religion of their fathers, gave up the pleasures and the vices to which they had been accustomed since the cradle, and embraced this new and foreign doctrine, leaving their different languages and different institutions to agree together in a sort of humble philosophy – and this above all things in an age better equipped than any both with the defensive powers

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51 The traditional, and doubtless legendary, founder of the Spartan constitution and military system

52 According to legend, Minos, son of Zeus and Europa, was king and legislator of Crete and, after his death, one of the judges of the shades in Hades.

53 In 451 BC the Roman constitution was suspended and complete power was given to a commission of ten patricians, the *decemviri legibus scribundis*, to draft a new code of laws. In 450 a second commission of *decemviri* completed work on the new law code, which was published the following year.

54 The 'one city' was Athens. According to Herodotus 1.29, Solon left Athens for ten years to avoid being compelled to repeal any of the laws he had made. The Athenians themselves could not repeal them because they were bound by solemn oaths to abide for ten years by all the laws that Solon might make.

55 Books 5–12 of the *Laws*

56 Matt 23:15

of learning and eloquence and with the might of monarchs. And although the world fought back with all its defensive power against the unarmed truth of the gospel, yet it could not prevent that truth from first occupying Greece, then invading the capital city and court of Nero, and soon spreading through all the provinces of the Roman empire as far as Cadiz and the Indies, as far as Africans and Scythians 'and Britons quite cut off from the whole world.'[57] These nations differed greatly among themselves in language, law, liturgy, customs, institutions, gods, religion, and physical shape; but out of all this discord harmony was born, and they all began to sing the same song, exalting Jesus Christ the only Lord and Saviour of the world.

All the time, confiscations, exile, imprisonment, torture, death meant nothing but the progress of the gospel. Who was ever found ready to face martyrdom for the laws of Solon or the precepts of Zeno?[58] For the simple teaching of Christ what thousands, old and young, matron and maid, were ready to lay their heads upon the block! And yet how much more remarkable, how much further from the common feelings of mankind are the teachings of the gospel than the paradoxes of philosophers! No prince ever attacked their teaching; yet it vanished of its own accord, like the laws and magic and rites of sacrifice. Who sacrifices nowadays to the gods of the Gentiles or slaughters victims according to the Jewish rite? Who nowadays has heard of Zoroaster?[59] Who gives a fig for those puzzling precepts of Pythagoras?[60] Who reads the life of Apollonius of Tyana[61] except as a kind of dream? Or rather, who thinks it worth reading at all? If Aristotle nowadays is famous in our universities, he owes this not to his followers but to Christians; he too would have perished had he not been mingled with Christ. Against the philosophy of the gospel, still young and growing, the world with all its defenders at once came out to fight: Jews battling under the pretext of religion

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57 Virgil *Eclogues* 1.67

58 Zeno of Citium in Cyprus (335–263 BC), founder of the Stoic philosophy

59 Zoroaster (Zarathustra, Zerdusht), dates uncertain, founder of the Zoroastrian religion of the Medes and Persians (ancient Iran)

60 The Greek philosopher Pythagoras (sixth century BC) taught that the soul is a fallen divinity confined within the body and condemned to a cycle of reincarnation from which it could win release by the cultivation of moral purity. Believing that the soul is purified by study, he taught a way of life in which the investigation of nature became a religion. He and his followers were much interested in arithmetic and interpreted the world as a whole through numbers.

61 Apollonius of Tyana in Cappadocia (4 BC) was a Neopythagorean sage and wandering teacher who pretended to miraculous powers. His life was written by Philostratus.

against the source from which all religion flows, philosophers powerfully equipped in every field of knowledge, sophists whose toughness in dispute made them invincible, orators with marvellous force of eloquence, tyrants armed ready for any form of cruelty, kings, chieftains, magistrates, magicians, conjurers, and the devils who are the masters of this world.

All these upheavals, this advancing ocean-tide of evil was faced, withstood, broken, and vanquished by the force of gospel truth. In the light of the gospel it was to be expected that the whole puppet-show of human power should vanish, and there shone forth that gospel in its simplicity and its lowliness that they were all trying to overwhelm. The books of those who published attacks on the gospel, with their great gifts, their marvellous erudition and their exquisite style, disappeared of their own accord like dreams, so that no fragments even remain except such as may have been preserved by Christians. Kings worship what they at first attacked; magic has vanished; demons are driven out howling. Philosophy has admitted her own ignorance and, abandoning the foolish wisdom of men, has embraced the wise foolishness of the cross.[62] Orators write their panegyrics on Jesus Christ, poets send the old gods packing and instead of many hymn one God only, Jesus Christ. This tremendous change in the world began a few years after Christ's passion to spread over the whole earth, and without human defenders continually grew greater until the leaven mixed in three measures of meal affected the whole loaf,[63] until the grain of mustard seed[64] buried in the ground reached out its branches far over Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Another feature was that the opponents of the gospel truth possessed not only various instruments of terror from which the bravest heart might shrink: decrees, tribunals, confiscations, proscriptions, exile, imprisonment, torture, the scourge, the block, the cross, fire, wild beasts, and every form of death; they also offered various baits by which the most rigid spirit might be corrupted. An emperor would say, 'Deny Christ and you shall be first among my magnates; and unless you do, all your possessions will be seized, I shall let loose my wrath upon your wife and children, and you yourself shall be thrown to the wild beasts.' Who at this time persuaded so many thousands of men that they should accept it with joy when their honours were stripped from them and their property was torn to pieces; that when they saw carried off to savage punishments those who after God were the dearest thing they had they should give thanks; that they themselves in the end of all, when

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62 foolishness of the cross] Cf 1 Cor 1:17–25 and Ep 337:499–501.
63 Luke 13:21; Matt 13:33
64 Luke 13:18–19; Matt 13:31–2; Mark 4:30–2

they might lawfully escape and gain all those great privileges, offered themselves to the tormentor of their own free will? No force of human eloquence could have achieved it; the divine force of truth that lay hidden in that grain of mustard-seed both could and did.

Nor did the teaching of the philosophers lack its attractions. The Stoics promised liberty, true riches, health in every form, kingship, and other things that sounded wonderful.[65] The Epicureans commended pleasure to the listening ears of men.[66] The Peripatetics coupled bodily advantages with virtue.[67] But the gospel teaching, though, it is true, it had no human terrors with which to convert anyone, yet at the same time had nothing in it attractive on the surface and indeed much that was quite incredible. It tells the world that a certain Jesus was crucified who by his death had set free the human race; that he was both God and man, a virgin's son, who had risen from the dead and sat at the right hand of God his Father; who had taught that those were blessed who, because in this world they professed his name, were mourners, were thirsty, were hungry, were afflicted, were evil spoken of, and were put to death, but that one day all men should rise again, and then before his tribunal the good would receive as their lot eternal life and the wicked the everlasting pains of hell. What philosopher would have dared to put forward such paradoxical and improbable ideas? And yet the unassuming language of the gospel has made them seem so plausible that a man who does not believe them is thought to be mad, and that all those thousands of people would rather give up their lives than their profession of the gospel truth.

Who were they then with whom this great transformation of the world began? A few disciples, unknown, of low degree, poor, and uneducated. Need I say anything of the remainder, since Peter the chief of them was a fisherman and uneducated and Paul a leather-worker, and none of them all was rich or powerful or of high birth? Either they possessed nothing in world

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65 According to the Stoics, reason teaches that such things as bodily health, wealth, friends, and death are 'things indifferent' that cannot affect us unless we inwardly assent to them or withhold that assent. Thus pleasure is good and pain is evil only if we judge it to be so. This is the basis for the ideal Stoic sage's indifference to the vicissitudes of life and of the Stoic's paradoxical assertion that the wise man alone is true king, rich in spite of poverty, happy and healthy despite physical torments, free even though a slave, etc.

66 The Epicureans taught that pleasure (*hédoné*, *voluptas*) was the highest aim of man. Properly understood, 'pleasure' was not profligate pleasure but rather freedom from trouble and pain, imperturbability, independence, and peace of mind.

67 Beginning with Aristotle himself, the Peripatetics attached importance to physical well-being and external goods as indispensable means of virtuous activity.

or, if they had had any possessions, they left them behind. And how could such men be responsible for so great a change? It was, of course, because they carried with them a medicine, its container cheap, its power and efficacy stemming from the power of God. The language of the gospel is simple and artless, and anyone who compares it with the histories of Thucydides or Livy will find much lacking and much to object to. The evangelists leave out so much and mention so much in few words; in how many passages the order does not fit, and in how many they seem to disagree among themselves! These faults might disgust a reader and make him unwilling to believe what he read. On the other hand, what pains are taken by the writers of human history over the choice of a starting-point, and how careful they are to record nothing indecorous or improbable, inconsistent or absurd! How vividly they make us see the thing they tell of, with what arts they beguile and retain the reader's attention for fear he gradually lose interest! And yet the monuments they built with all this toil have mostly disappeared, and what remains is not read universally and without doubts. Who is there credulous enough to affirm that there is no falsehood in the story Livy tells?[68] And yet all those thousands of men have existed who preferred to face death ten times over than to admit that there is one sentence of falsehood in the gospel narratives. Do we not clearly see from this that it is not a matter of human power or human wisdom but of the power of God? There is a hidden virtue in this medicine, and once introduced into the body it spread through all the nations of the earth as it might through all the limbs. We have found the reason why the truth of the gospel spread in so few years through the whole earth in the hands of humble men, while the world reacted with cruelty of every kind. And now it may have occurred to someone to wonder how it has come about that in more recent centuries, when the world had Christian princes and bishops who were learned and rich and endowed with great authority, Christ's kingdom has contracted within such narrow limits. For if we could find the reason for this, perhaps we should more quickly find a remedy.

But I forgot myself long ago, and transgress the limits of a preface. I return now to Luke our physician, who will, I do not doubt, receive a warm welcome from all other men. The wise preacher says, 'Honour a physician on account of necessity.'[69] How much more should we pay this physician the honour that is his due, who gave us so efficacious a medicine, which is a necessity for everyone, unless the man exists who is free from all guilt and has no need to get better! And it will have its effect if we grow really tired of our diseases and bite off some of this medicine constantly, if we chew it assiduously and

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68 His *History of Rome* (*Ab urbe condita*)
69 Ecclus 38:1

pass it down into our spiritual stomachs, if we do not cast up again what we have swallowed but keep it in the stomach of the spirit until it develops all its powers and transforms the whole of us into itself. I have learned from my own experience that there is little profit in the gospel if one's reading of it is idle and perfunctory. But he who grows familiar with it by continuous and careful thought will find a power in it that is in no other books.

And now let me confront those who have their suspicions by saying that, if I have dedicated each of my paraphrases of the Gospels to a different prince, this is accident and not a plan for my own advantage; the same thing has happened to me here as with the apostolic Epistles. When I was writing on Matthew[70] the last thing I expected was that I should be asked for John[71] and then Luke. Now, to avoid an empty gap among the evangelists, I shall add Mark[72] too. Not but what the man who dedicated different Gospels to different persons seems to me to do nothing more peculiar than St Jerome did when he gave separate dedications to each of the prophets, even the minor ones. Elsewhere I have drawn the reader's attention to the fact, and I now repeat the warning, that he must not attribute more weight to a paraphrase written by me than he would to commentaries written by others.[73] My purpose in writing paraphrases is not to strike the gospel out of men's hands but to make it possible for it to be read more conveniently and with greater profit, just as food is seasoned to make us more willing to eat it and enjoy it. I must also warn the less intelligent reader that nowhere in a paraphrase does he hear me speaking; when I speak humbly and truthfully under the guise of the apostle, he must not think that I am speaking arrogantly in my own person.

May the Lord Jesus give your Majesty, illustrious king, a share of his own Spirit, that under a truly Christian prince the gospel truth may reign and flourish daily more and more.[74]

From Basel, 23 August 1523

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70 Ep 1255
71 Ep 1333
72 Ep 1400
73 See Ep 1255:41–2, 1333:422, 1342:1025–6.
74 Béda objected that Erasmus cannot both claim no more for paraphrase than for the commentaries of others and also say that not he but Luke speaks in this *Paraphrase*. In the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 490B–D Erasmus replies that paraphrasing is a kind of commentary and that he deserves the same indulgence as to correctness that is granted all commentators, though commentary form may differ from the unbroken discourse he has chosen to use. (JEP)

PARAPHRASE ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

Chapter 1

Since in human histories no little pleasure or usefulness is gotten from a knowledge of events, the first requirement is generally trustworthiness [*fides*] in narrative.[1] But this quality ought much more to be present in a gospel narrative, for it does not just provide entertainment for an idle mind or usefulness for this transient life but is in fact necessary for the true godliness without which no one attains eternal salvation or the undying bliss of life everlasting. And indeed there is no great danger if someone does not know who Hannibal or Alexander was; what deeds Epaminondas or Scipio did; what Solon, Lycurgus, or Draco prescribed; what Socrates, Plato, or Aristotle taught.[2] Yet knowledge of these things, given the nature of the human

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1 'Trustworthiness' is *fides*, also often translated as 'faithfulness,' 'fidelity,' 'trust,' 'reliability,' or 'credence' in what follows. To illustrate the use of *fides* in the paraphrase on Luke's prologue and into verse 5, the Latin word is added in brackets where it is used in Erasmus' text. Erasmus often (though not in this passage) also uses *fiducia* 'faithfulness' or 'trust,' and on at least one occasion attempts to distinguish the ranges of the two terms; see his 1527 annotation on Rom 1:17 CWE 56 42–4 with n2. Cf also the Index of Latin Words in the other *Paraphras*e and *Annotations* volumes of CWE. He may have chosen to confine himself here to *fides* and words with the same root, to the exclusion of *fiducia* or other synonyms, in order to move seamlessly from *fides* in its application to the nature of history and the writer of history to his version of Luke's specific claims to being a believer in the new faith and therefore a credible evangelist.

2 Erasmus lists figures from Greek and Roman history familiar to educated people of his (and Luke's) times: Alexander the Great and Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, the well-known Greek philosophers. In the first century BC the Roman Cornelius Nepos wrote a biographical sketch of Epaminondas, a notable general of Thebes in the late fourth century BC. Scipio presumably refers to Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus the Elder, most distinguished among several Scipiones in the Roman war against the Carthaginian Hannibal and the one who brought

condition, has its benefits. But whoever has not known who the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are, whoever has not learned what Jesus Christ the Son of God did for the salvation of humankind, what he taught, what he promised to those who cling fast to the gospel teaching, what he threatened for those who neglect or even disdain it, that person will not be able to avoid exclusion from the company of the godly, exclusion from the joys of heavenly life, and he will be consigned with the ungodly to the never-ending punishments of hell.[3]

At first, indeed, the gospel started off being planted by word of mouth only, but with complete trustworthiness [*fides*], through the apostles, chosen by the Lord himself for this purpose, and through the rest of the disciples under inspiration of the Holy Spirit throughout all parts of the world; and it daily spreads more and more widely. But the integrity of a narrative that reaches a large number of people by being relayed orally, like being passed from hand to hand, is more readily corrupted than one that is committed to writing. For this reason the apostle Matthew, one of the twelve whom the Lord Jesus had particularly chosen and assigned to this task, and Mark, a disciple of the apostle Peter,[4] were admonished by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to put into writing a summary of the gospel narrative – not doing so to snatch from others the possibility of writing about the same events but so that no one deceived by pseudo-apostles would follow the Jewish way or silly tales instead of the gospel.[5] Indeed, just as not everyone preached the gospel with equal integrity, so those who write do not treat gospel history with equal fidelity [*fides*]. For many have tried to construct an account of the gospel story in the same way as historians of human affairs generally do, often mixing false things with true and reporting as established facts what

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the Second Punic War to an end in 201 BC; the best-known account of that war is in Livy 21–30. Solon, Lycurgus, and Draco were all legendary early lawgivers in Greek cities, Draco and Solon in Athens and Lycurgus in Sparta. Plutarch wrote lives of Solon (including reference to Solon's predecessor Draco, parts of whose code survived in classical Athenian law) and of Lycurgus.

3 Pleasure and usefulness are common claims of classical historians, Greek or Roman, offered to justify the significance of their work. See eg Thucydides 1.22.4, Herodotus 1 preface. Cicero *De oratore* 2.36 asserts that history is the *magistra vitae* 'teacher of life' (also his view of philosophy in *Tusculan Disputations* 2.16 and 5.5). See also Sallust *Jugurtha* 4.1–7, Livy preface 10, Tacitus *Annales* 3.65.1 and *Agricola* 46.3–4. The view is also mockingly represented in Lucian *How History Should Be Written* 53.

4 Mark the disciple of Peter mentioned in 1 Pet 5:13 was traditionally thought to be the author of the Gospel of Mark. Cf the translator's note on that passage CWE 44 108 n18 and ODCC at 'Mark, Gospel of St.'

5 'Silly tales' is *ineptas fabulas*, an expression found in the Vulgate at 1 Tim 4:7 (but not in the Neo-Vulgate as reprinted in Nestle-Aland).

they have gotten from unverified common rumours, sometimes, corrupted by lust for lying or some other passion, even reporting sheer inventions of their own. And, inclined towards corruption as human affairs are, perhaps in the future too there will arise those who, by lying about the deeds and teaching of Christ and his disciples, will cause no trust [*fides*] to be put even in the true accounts.

Hence the Spirit of Jesus has been plucking at my heart too. Matthew and Mark, certainly with the utmost reliability [*fides*], produced what they judged at the time was sufficient; but they deliberately left some things to be written by others, meanwhile supplying by word of mouth what was missing in the written version.[6] There were others who tried the same thing but not with like reliability [*fides*]; some of them mixed in many things that were much at odds with gospel teaching, while others were more concerned to fill out the great gaps in the historical account with tales unsuitable to gospel seriousness than to relate the things that the Holy Spirit has judged productive of eternal bliss. The Spirit wants me, in constructing an ordered narrative of the gospel, to supply points overlooked by some and to shut out the authority of those others who have produced or will produce their own lies or things known from popular rumour, not the best witness to events, instead of definite, verified facts.[7] Yet we have not constructed our ordered account of events so as to omit nothing of what happened; we report only what we know pertains to gospel godliness and gaining eternal life. For it would be an unending task to write down everything Jesus did or taught.[8] In any case there are some things that cannot be ignored without damage to hope of salvation; there are also things the knowledge of which contributes much that is useful to the pursuit of godliness; and finally there are things that can be left unknown with no danger to salvation, no serious damage to godliness, just as in matters concerning the divine, what we know is a very small part compared to what we do not know.

Therefore we shall neither track down every fact nor make mention of what is unverified, but only [report] things of whose complete reliability [*fides*] we have been assured by undeniable apostles and disciples who not only

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6 For things reported orally even after the written Gospels, cf John 20:30–1 and its paraphrase in CWE 46 220.

7 'Hence the Spirit . . . verified facts' is a single sentence in Latin. From this point on in the preface, Erasmus' Luke-voice will speak of himself alternately in first-person singular and in authorial first-person plural, as replicated in the translation.

8 For the 'unending task' cf John 21:25, its paraphrase in CWE 46 225, and n6 above.

themselves saw with their own eyes, took in with their own ears, touched with their hands many things that they related to us, but even had some part in the events they related; for they did many things at Jesus' bidding and experienced many more things for his sake, being inseparable companions of Christ Jesus in all things.[9]

Nor should my trustworthiness [*fides*] be less because I record things I did not see myself but learned from others. It suited a matter so unfamiliar, so strange and unbelievable, to win credence [*fides*] first from all the senses of the body and then to be confirmed in clearly visible wonders and miracles. Yet these proofs cannot be longlasting. Nor did Christ make himself visible for any long time, and miracles are granted to human disbelief only temporarily, themselves too to cease someday. It is enough for the rudiments of faith [*fides*] to go forward from these beginnings. Thomas saw, heard, touched, and then believed; but the Lord calls blessed those who, though they have not seen the things done, still trust [*fidant*] in the gospel word no less than if they had been present at their doing.[10] But if trust [*fides*] is placed in eyewitnesses only, even those who enjoyed companionship with the Lord in the flesh recount many things at which they were not present but of which they learned from other reliable [*bonae fidei*] witnesses, such as concerning the nativity, the genealogy of Christ, the wise men, the flight into Egypt, the temptation by Satan.[11] Though we did not see the beginnings, we still have seen the results.

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9 That the apostles and disciples were eyewitnesses and participants in a shared life with Jesus during his earthly ministry is based not only on incidents from the Gospels themselves, such as their distribution of food during the feeding miracles or Thomas' touching the wounds on Christ's resurrected body (John 20:25–9), but also on their own later claims at Acts 4:20 and 2 Pet 1:16 to having been eyewitnesses. For *manibus contrectarant* 'touched with their hands' cf 1 John 1:1. For *aliqua pars fuerant eorum quae gesta narrabant* 'had some part in the events they related,' cf Aeneas' comment to Dido at *Aeneid* 2.5–6 as he prepares to relate the horrors of the end of the Trojan War: 'the wretched things I myself saw and in which I had a great part' *quaeque ipse miserrima vidi / et quorum pars magna fui*.

10 For doubting and the blessedness of those who do not doubt see John 20:24–9. The description of Thomas again echoes 1 John 1:1, cited in the preceding note. The 'gospel word' is *evangelico sermoni*, the first appearance in this *Paraphrase* of Erasmus' signature translation *sermo* for the Greek λόγος 'word' in John 1:1. See CWE 46 15–17 with n16 for discussion, and the Greek and Latin indexes to this and other *Paraphrase* volumes for further comment on his use of *sermo*; his fullest defence is the *Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo'* CWE 73 1–40.

11 The list of infancy events conflates the narratives of Matthew and Luke. The eyewitness to the earliest parts of Jesus' life as a mortal would be his mother Mary; cf Acts 1:14 and chapter 2 99 with n96. For the claim that eyewitness,

We have seen in the apostles what the Lord had promised in his gospel. We have seen them, inspired by a heavenly spirit imparting the Holy Spirit to other baptized persons too by the laying on of hands; indeed, we have even experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in our own selves. We have seen demons put to flight at Jesus' name, diseases dispelled, poisons rendered harmless. We have seen the majesty of the gospel shine forth throughout the whole world in a few years' time, at the hands of poor, lowly, and ordinary folk, and the princes of the world opposing it in vain. Of course the Lord had foretold this too: 'When I am lifted from the earth, I shall draw all things to myself.'[12] Such authorities, such outcomes permit us no doubt either about what came before our time or about what has been promised for future ages. All that had been foretold in the sayings of the prophets Jesus made good in his coming; all that before his departure from this earth he foretold would happen to the apostles has come to pass; and there can be no doubt that with like faithfulness [*fides*] he will make good the other things to be fulfilled that he has deferred till his second coming: the resurrection of bodies, the rewards for the godly and for the ungodly.

We have then zealously traced out from completely reliable informants the whole sequence of the gospel business and from them selected what seemed chiefly to contribute to gospel faith [*fides*] and godliness; and not mentioning things in a scattered and piecemeal way as each one came to mind but following chronological order and the sequence of events, we have carefully set out the account, even going more deeply into the subject, that is, starting from the conception of the one who was the forerunner of the Saviour's arrival, in his birth as in his preaching and death. Then the new kind of conception by a virgin, the birth of the child, the circumcision, the purification, the prophecies delivered over the child, certain marks of his divine character, which flashed forth like sparks even when he was a boy – concerning which the others who wrote reliably [*fides*] before us have mentioned almost nothing. After that the baptism and preaching of John, then the baptism of Jesus, the temptation, the teaching, the wonders, the death, burial, resurrection, and return into heaven.[13]

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either by the historian himself or by the historian's informants, provides the best evidence, cf Thucydides 1.22.2–3 and Herodotus 2.3, 2.99, 5.59.

12 A quotation from John 12:32, with the Latin reading 'all things' rather than the 'all men' or 'all people' familiar from the Greek text and modern translations. Erasmus himself had argued for 'all people' as the correct reading in his annotation *omnia traham* on that verse; see CWE 46 155 n37.

13 This paragraph forms an outline or table of contents of Luke's Gospel, to be followed immediately by an outline of the Acts of the Apostles – so Erasmus

With all this arranged in order, we shall add in a second volume how he sent the Holy Spirit, and the beginnings and steady growth of the infant church; what the chief apostles did and taught, Peter, James, Paul, and Barnabas; with what miracles and what sufferings they glorified the name of our Lord Jesus – not that I think these things will be new to you, Theophilus, but partly so that you may relearn in an orderly way what you learned piecemeal from others, and partly so that with surer confidence [*fides*] you may comprehend from our writing what you had heard by word of mouth from others, abandoning the silly tales of many, tales now advertising themselves under the false name of gospel – and not you only, for we do not write this for one person, but also for all those in this age or in the future, who are now or will be what you are called, that is, all Theophiluses [friends of God], who, renouncing Satan with ready belief and godly studies, seek out friendship with God; and who, spurning the evils and the good things of this world, long for things that are heavenly and everlasting.[14]

Now the time was at hand that had been established in the divine purpose, foretold by various sayings of the prophets and for so many generations longed for by holy and devout mortals: the time for the Son of God to take human nature upon himself, when he would redeem the human race by his death, instruct us by his teaching and actions in knowledge of the truth and zeal for gospel godliness, and ultimately raise us by his promises to the

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elaborates one understanding of *a principio omnia* 'all things from the very first' (AV and NRSV) in verse 3 that takes *principio* as the beginning of the story rather than as the beginning of Luke's research; cf RSV 'for some time past.' In the 1516 annotation *assequuto omnia* (on 1:3), elaborated in *1522*, Erasmus had included remarks on the meaning of ἄνωθεν (Vulg *a principio*), explaining that it could mean either a new and fuller narrative of what others had reported but in part not completely reliably, or an account that goes from beginning to end. The paraphrased preface accounts for both possibilities: Erasmus has already dealt with earlier partial or falsified accounts (beginning at 'Hence the Spirit' above), while admitting that the narrative of his Luke-voice will not include every detail. His outline of the Gospel from the conception of the Baptist through Jesus' ascension and on into a second volume about the early growth of the church presumes the second possible meaning of ἄνωθεν.

14 Erasmus alludes to the etymology of the name Theophilus 'lover of God' or 'beloved of God' in his description of future seekers in quest of *amicitia Dei* 'friendship with God' or 'God's friendship.' For the advance from oral to written instruction, see 18, and cf the annotation *de quibus eruditus es* (on 1:4) relating Luke's purpose to ancient modes of training catechumens.
The paraphrase on the Gospel's prefatory verses ends here.

hope of a heavenly life. Since this whole undertaking was a strange affair, never heard of in any age, no kind of proof was overlooked, with divine wisdom directing by secret means everything that might win among mortals faith [*fides*] in an event in itself not likely to be believed. For who ever heard that a mortal had been born of a mortal on earth to rule as God forever in heaven? Even the gentiles' histories are full of prodigies. In the books of the Old Testament we learn that fire was sent from heaven, that a sea was divided into two parts, that water was teased out of a rock by a blow from a staff, that the dead even came back to life.[15] Who ever heard that a virgin gave birth without a man's action? But the source of our salvation was for everyone to be persuaded that Jesus was the Messiah whose coming had been promised by all the predictions of the prophets, whom the whole law of Moses had foreshadowed, from whom alone salvation might be hoped for by all. Hence in the divine purpose a man was prepared to be the forerunner of the heavenly offspring of a virgin, being himself born in a marvellous way; one who would win, by the nobility of his family, by the unheard-of holiness of his way of life, and by an authority among all produced by his rare endowments, the first attention and trust among sceptical Jews, before Jesus was known: just as the gospel philosophy, whose head and author was Christ, was first commended to the world by the witness of the Old Law, of which Zechariah and John served as a type.[16] Soon enough, when the situation was reversed, just as Christ in the revelation of his powers dimmed the glory of

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15 Prodigies, or ominous events that occur contrary to the laws of nature, are a regular feature of ancient historiography. Annual lists of prodigies that required expiation by official action in Rome are reported by Livy at eg 4.21.5 and regularly throughout books 21–45. See *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* 3rd ed, ed S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (Oxford 1996) at 'Prodigies' and the Latin authors cited in L&S at *prodigium*. For the biblical prodigies listed here, see Gen 15:7–17, the torch that consumed Abram's sacrifice; Exod 3:1–6, the burning bush; Exod 13:21, the pillar of fire that guided Moses and the Israelites by night; Exod 14:21–9, the parting of the sea; Exod 17:1–7, water from a rock; 1 Kings 17:17–24, 2 Kings 13:21, and Ezek 37:1–10 (a prophetic vision), raising the dead.

16 Erasmus speaks often of the 'philosophy of Christ' (*philosophia Christi*) of which the 'gospel philosophy' is a variant, that is, the principles for Christian spiritual development; see eg his *Enchiridion* CWE 66 73–4, 78, 81, 84, and 'philosophy' in the general indexes of CWE 45, 46, 49, and 50. The developmental idea is biblical; see 1 Cor 3:1–3, Heb 5:12–14. For a discussion of Erasmus' knowledge of philosophy and his use of the term 'philosophy of Christ,' see John Monfasani 'Twenty-fifth Annual Margaret Mann Phillips Lecture: Erasmus and the Philosophers' ERSY 32 (2012) 47–68.

John, so the splendour of the gospel's majesty, when it revealed itself to the world, abolished, so to speak, the authority of Moses' law.[17]

Now the patriarch Jacob, being near to death and at the inspiration of a spirit of foreknowledge, prophesied many things that would come to pass in later ages. When he got to Judah, the tribe from which the Lord Jesus would descend according to the flesh, he delivered a prophecy as follows: 'The sceptre shall not be taken away from Judah or the ruler from his thigh until he comes who is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of nations.'[18] This prophecy showed plainly enough that the Messiah would come when the Jewish nation, which had always been governed by generals, judges, kings, and priests of its own nation, would be obedient to a foreign prince, at the same time showing that the gospel grace, spurned by the Jews, would resettle among the gentiles. But first of all, Herod the son of Antipater, though he was not of Jewish birth and was otherwise a godless man, not only was co-opted into honorary membership in the race but also by Caesar's favour held kingship over the Jews.[19] So even on this evidence the scribes and Pharisees, who claimed precise knowledge of the Law, could have concluded that the time was near for the birth of the one who would end earthly reigns and bring in the heavenly kingdom, and who would create shepherds instead of tyrants

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17 The *Catena aurea* on 1:5 cites Chrysostom commenting on the way this Gospel narrative opens with the lesser account of the background and miraculous conception of the Baptist in preparation for the similar but greater story of the birth of Jesus; it adds a quotation from Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1619C on the utility of praising not just the character and conduct of future preachers but that of their parents as well: 'St John the Baptist is ennobled by his parents, his miracles, his habits, his endowments, and his suffering.' This strategy is a standard recommendation of the ancient rhetorical handbooks; see eg *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.10 and 12–14, Cicero *De inventione* 2.177–8. The *Gloss* (on 1:5) quotes Ambrose on the same point. Hugh of St Cher (on 1:5) 127v, citing John 1:8–9 and 3:28–30, associates the account of John's birth with the figure of John as the morning star that appears when the night is darkest to announce the coming of the sun, at whose arrival his own light is extinguished. Erasmus reiterates the day star and sun theme in the paraphrase on 1:14, before the theme of light appears in this Gospel in the canticles at 1:78–9 and 2:32. See also n125.

18 Gen 49:10, according to the Vulgate and DV (not AV and RSV); the passage is quoted again in the paraphrase on 24:27 CWE 48 254.

19 Citation of the prophecy from Genesis in connection with Luke 1:5, with identification of the expected foreign-born king as Herod and his support by Roman authorities, goes back at least to Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 309C–D. Bede is repeated or summarized by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 1:5), Hugh of St Cher (on 1:5) 127r, the *Catena aurea* (on 1:5), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:5).

and fathers instead of masters.[20] Indeed, though the office of the Jewish priesthood was something very high and an object of wonder to all, the Holy Spirit had foretold through the prophets that even this would be done away with at the coming of the one who, anointed not by mortals with tangible oil but spiritually by God with heavenly oil,[21] would take away all the sins of the world by a single sacrifice, certainly, but a completely effective one; and through faith in the gospel and the bestowal of the Spirit of God he would make all things holy. For Daniel had foretold that after sets of seven years the Holy One of holy ones would be anointed and then the sacrifices and victims of the Old Law would cease.[22] When eternal things come, temporal things will cease; when spiritual things come, carnal things will cease; when truth comes, appearances will give way; when light comes, shadows will fade to nothing; when Christ begins to speak, the voice of the dull-witted Law will fall silent, until even it openly proclaims him whom till now it has, as if in knowing nods, hinted at in certain images more than expressed in plain words.

So this was the time: Herod, in the first place a non-Jew and then a godless man and polluted by many murders in his family and out of it, held power among the Jews, not on the authority of God but by Augustus Caesar's favour.[23] The religion of the Jewish temple, which consisted in bodi-

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20 'Shepherds' are *pastores* and 'masters' *domini*. Tyrants and masters identify political sovereignty; titles borrowed from the humblest activities of human social life, shepherds (or pastors) and fathers, replace them with ecclesiastical guidance and protection. Here Erasmus ignores the familiar use of 'shepherd' for 'ruler' in the OT and also in Greek and Roman literature.

21 For anointing with oil in OT priestly ordination, see eg Exod 29:21, 30:22–33, Exodus 40, Leviticus 8. For the spiritual oil that anoints God's chosen one, see Heb 1:9, where Ps 45:7 is quoted (also quoted in the paraphrase on 24:27 CWE 48 241).

22 'Sets of [or 'weeks of'] seven years' refers to Dan 9:2 and 24–7. Jerome's discussion of this part of Daniel, *Comm in Danielem* PL 25 542A–550C, gives a literal, specifically Jewish, interpretation of the total number of years meant by the prophecy but also accepts earlier Christian writers who assert a spiritual interpretation of the *sanctus sanctorum* 'the Holy One of holy ones' as referring to the Messiah, a view that shaped Christian understanding of the passage for a long time to come. The Hebrew term for 'holy of holies' is not used of persons, according to L.F. Hartmann and A.A. Dilella *The Book of Daniel* The Anchor Bible 23 (Garden City, NY 1978) 244, but the translation here reflects what would be Erasmus' understanding based on the tradition represented by Jerome. Erasmus cites the same part of Dan 9:24 in his elaboration of 24:27; see CWE 48 240 (where the translation is only 'holy of holies').

23 The complicated history of King Herod the Great and his successors rests chiefly on the Hellenized and Romanized Jewish writer Josephus, who wrote (in

ly figures and ceremonies, was in its greatest flowering among humankind, while before God, under a false cloak of religion, the height of godlessness ruled among the scribes, Pharisees, elders, and priests. At this time the coming of our Lord Jesus first began to be known in the world, in the following initial steps.

There was under the godless king a godly priest, the remnant of an ancient order not yet corrupted by so many vices. His name was Zechariah, and at that time the lots and the regular rotation summoned him to the administration of the rites. For David had divided the whole priestly clan into two leading families, Eleazar and Ithamar. The rest of the families he subjected to these and distributed into twenty-four divisions, so that each in order would have an eight-day turn at performing the rites. In this period they would abstain from everything that according to the rites of Moses seemed to make a person unclean: refraining from marital intercourse and not attending to their private dwellings, but occupying all their time in the temple so that they might conduct the ritual more chastely and purely; in the meantime it was permissible for the others to be free for wives, children, and other secular but necessary business. Also, as long as this arrangement was divided by lot, the eighth place among the twenty-four families fell to Abijah, from which Zechariah descended and to whose turn he had succeeded.[24] Although this seemed to happen by chance, everything was arranged by divine purpose, even the random number of the ordering. For just as the

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Greek) *Jewish Antiquities* and the *Jewish War* in the last third of the first century AD and was known to the Christian exegetical tradition. See chapter 3 n3.

24 The clan of Abijah held the eighth position in the rotation of priestly families after the reforms of David (1 Chron 24:7). The explanation is noted in the exegetical tradition: Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 309A, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 693C, Hugh of St Cher (on 1:5) 127v. Bede, followed by the *Gloss* (on 1:8) and quoted by the *Catena aurea* (on 1:8), discusses the reforms of David in his comment on verse 8. There he and the *Gloss* include the restrictions on priestly behaviour that Erasmus mentions, though no such restrictions are given in 1 Chronicles 24 or elsewhere in Scripture. Ambrosiaster, however, says in a comment on the married priests of the Old Testament, on 1 Tim 3:12–13, that 'David established twenty-four classes of priests to serve in turn . . . so that in the time when the lot did not fall to them to serve at the altar, they would tend to the care of their households; but when their period of service was near, having purified themselves for several days they went to the temple to make offerings to God'; PL 17 471A–B. Bede PL 92 314A–B and the *Gloss* recapitulate this point in commenting on 1:23 that the temporary chastity of Jewish priests for altar service is a model for the perpetual chastity of priests in their own day. They are joined by Hugh of St Cher (on 1:23) 130r.

number seven is for many reasons an image of the Old Law, so the number eight matches gospel grace, because everlasting bliss is freely granted no longer by means of the works of the Law but by faith.[25] And what is more, Zechariah had a wife, Elizabeth, not so much commendable for the nobility of her family (though in fact she was descended from Aaron, the first priest of the Israelites) as revered for the uprightness of her character, so that the wife was worthy of such a husband.

For it was a truly holy marriage, bonded together not so much by the joining of bodies as by like-mindedness and shared godliness, because both were truly righteous – though not the righteousness of the Pharisees, who advertised themselves to people's eyes with a false appearance of sanctimony for the sake of monetary gain and glory, covering their faces, giving their alms to the sound of a trumpet, pursuing a reputation for piety by wordy praying in public squares, while their hearts oozed every filth of evil deeds! But Zechariah and Elizabeth wholeheartedly observed everything that the Lord had instructed in the Law, so that they gave people no handle for reproach and, something very difficult, they commended themselves by the purity of their lives even to the eyes of God.[26] This too was an arrangement of

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Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1622A–1623A, followed by the *Gloss* (on 1:8), considers that Zechariah was the high priest. Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:9) discusses the possibility only to reject it. Erasmus leaves the question untouched.

25 The spiritual significance of the numbers seven (for the old dispensation) and eight (for the new) is found in Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 309B; see also Erasmus' remarks at the end of the paraphrase on chapter 23 CWE 48 226.
The clause beginning 'everlasting bliss' appeared to Noël Béda, syndic of the Paris faculty of theology and a strong conservative critic of Erasmus' biblical work (see *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation* ed. P.G. Bietenholz and T.B. Deutscher (Toronto 1985–7) I:116–18 and Erika Rummel *Catholic Critics* [Nieuwkoop 1989] II 29–55), to be one of many places in Erasmus' *Paraphrases* that sounded like Luther's idea of *sola fides* 'faith alone' as the criterion for salvation. Erasmus replied in the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* (1526) LB IX 490E that his remark applied to the law of Moses and its requirements, and that if everlasting bliss were not freely (*gratis*) given, then it was not grace (*gratia*) and Paul had misspoken more than once. In the *Supputatio* (1527) LB IX 596E–597D he gave an extensive defence of gospel grace as a free gift, arguing from Isaiah through Revelation, and dismissed Luther's views as not relevant to what Luke says to Luke's contemporaries.

26 'Handle for reproach' is *ansam reprehensionis*. 'Handle' for 'opportunity, occasion' is one of Erasmus' favourite metaphors; see *Adagia* I iv 4 *Ansam quaerere* 'To look for a handle', and the indexes to eg CWE 46, 48, and 49. The explanation of 1:6, that the couple were both righteous before God and also without reproach in the eyes of their human neighbours (rather than taking the whole

the divine purpose, so that he who would bear witness to the coming Christ would himself be commended to the Jewish people in every respect, first by the priestly nobility of both his father's and his mother's family, and the blameless life of each, then by his own rare and admirable virtues, and finally by his glorious dying on behalf of truth. Such a herald, indeed, was fitting for one who had come to draw the whole world to himself by his fragrance of good repute.[27]

Why, it had even been arranged by divine providence that the strange circumstances of John's birth would rouse people's minds to admiration for him and that they would expect nothing commonplace from one who was born not in the usual course of nature but by a gracious act of heaven. For though the holiness of Zechariah and Elizabeth was most highly approved by all, in one regard their godliness seemed scarcely blessed. For the two of them had grown old together childless.[28] Now as among the Jews marital fecundity was regarded as a splendid thing, so barrenness was a special disgrace and was counted among the chief evils of life. It was commonly thought that those who had not had the good fortune to enrich God's holy people with offspring were rejected by God. For the carnal Jews had not yet learned that it was a spiritual people whom God wished always to be increasing in numbers by spiritual generation; they had not heard that blessed are those who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of God.[29] The

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verse as expressing a single idea of righteousness before God), is expressed in fuller or shorter form by Origen *Hom in Lucam* PL 26 237B–238B, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1620C–1621D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 310A–B, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 693D, and the *Gloss* (on 1:6). The quality of the matrimonial bond between Zechariah and Elizabeth sketched here is typical of Erasmus' thinking on marriage, expressed in numerous places in his writings. Some of the most obvious are the *Encomium matrimonii*, printed in 1518 but probably written much earlier, CWE 25 129–45, the colloquy *Coniugium* 'Marriage' (1523) CWE 39 306–27, and the long work *Institutio christiani matrimonii* (1526) CWE 69 203–438.

27 For the figure of the fragrance of Christ to describe his drawing power, cf Song of Sol 1:3a (Vulg and DV) and 2 Cor 2:14–16. For the points in which the Baptist recommended himself as the herald of Christ, see the paraphrase on 1:5 above with n17.

28 'Had grown old together' is *consenuissent* (from *consenescere*), the same verb used of the elderly couple Baucis and Philemon in Ovid *Metamorphoses* 8.634; Ovid tells the story of their hospitable treatment of two gods disguised as wayfaring strangers. Erasmus alludes to a more dramatic part of this tale in the paraphrase on 24:29–31 CWE 48 271 with n141.

29 See Matt 19:12.

situation was a grievous torment to them both, but especially to Elizabeth, who was commonly called by the reproachful label 'barren' and, being a woman of deplorable barrenness, was counted among unfortunate wives, for after many years spent with her husband she had produced no fruit of the marriage. And indeed the reproach of sterility generally falls particularly on women.[30] The old age of each had increased their despair of offspring, but what natural power did not give to the meeting of their bodies, divine favour granted to the devout prayers of their hearts.

And so Zechariah was carrying out the duties of the priesthood in the order of his turn, which, as we said, was Abijah's, and was occupied in the temple in the sight of God, purely and chastely performing the rites. And when someone had to be chosen by lot, according to custom, to enter the most secret inner part of the temple, the part called the holy of holies, he was chosen by lot[31] to enter the holy of holies (where no one was permitted to enter except the high priest or his designate) and to place on the altar in the secret inner part of the temple the holy incense of prescribed fragrances, stacte, onycha, galbanum, and clearest frankincense.[32] This kind of sacrifice was considered the holiest of all among the Jews, and the general crowd was not let in to see it, nor even any of the Levites. All these rest remained outside, closed off by a curtain, praying that God would deign to find acceptable what was being offered for the welfare of the whole people, until the priest, having completed the sacrifice inside, came out before the people and did the remaining things that concerned the sacrificial rituals defined in the Law.

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30 The *Catena aurea* (on 1:17) cites Chrysostom as observing that the wives of the patriarchs, specifically Sarah (Gen 16:1–18:15 and 21:1–7), Rebecca (Gen 25:21), and Rachel (Gen 29:30), were barren, even though they were all righteous and virtuous. See also Hannah (1 Samuel 1) and the mother of Samson (Judges 13).

31 'Chosen by lot' occurs twice in the paraphrase on verse 9 in versions of a classical Latin form, *sorte deligi* 'to be chosen by lot.' In an annotation *sorte exiit* (on 1:9) Erasmus had expressed dissatisfaction with clumsy attempts at clarifying the Greek ἔλαχεν 'he was allotted' that produced a Latin meaning 'it [or 'he'] went out / departed by lot,' and in his own text of the NT said *sors illi obvenit* 'the lot fell upon him.'

32 The recipe for incense is in Exod 30:34. The Vulgate text of that passage modifies 'frankincense' with 'clearest' *lucidissimus*; here Erasmus prefers the more poetic *pellucidus*, which means the same thing. The words for incense here and in the paraphrases on verses 10 and 11 below reflect the observation made by Valla *Annot in Lucam* and restated by Erasmus in the annotation *ut incensum poneret* (on 1:9), that the Vulgate's *incensum* inadequately translates the Greek because it omits any specific allusion to fragrance and only denotes burning. Here he uses *suffitum* 'incense' and *odores* 'fragrances, perfumes.'

Indeed, the priest prayed not just for the people but also for himself, according to the prescripts of the Law, for he too was mortal and subject to human errors and flaws.[33] So though Zechariah had at one time wearied God with many prayers to free his wife from the reproach of barrenness and himself from the burden of childlessness, on the present occasion, already despairing of offspring, in ardent prayer as if in God's presence he asked for the general redemption of his people, expected for many generations now. And the incense rose from the altar and spread through the air. But the prayer of the devout priest reached all the way to God, carried there by angels whose part it is to carry the prayers of the devout to the heavenly presence, and then to bring down to us God's generous gifts.[34] So an angel was sent from heaven and stood at the right side of the altar where the incense was burning, as if poised to announce glad tidings, because things on the right side are an omen of happiness.[35]

When Zechariah unexpectedly saw this angel gleaming with heavenly light (for he did not walk up in human fashion but made himself visible all at once), he was thrown into a state of confusion and was seized with fear – not because the angel displayed any cause for fear but because the feebleness of the human body does not endure the majesty of heavenly spirits. But as it is natural for human feebleness to shudder at the unexpected sight of an angel, so it is natural for angels' kindness to take away our fear by a mild address.[36] So, greeting Zechariah with a mild look on his face and in a mild

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33 The ritual content of the priest's prayers is noted in Heb 5:1–3 and 7:27, following the words of Moses to Aaron, Lev 9:7.

34 Angels are charged not only with bringing God's messages to humankind but also with relaying the prayers of the faithful to heaven, as in Tob 12:6–15 and Rev 8:3–4, passages cited by Erasmus himself in his 1524 *Modus orandi Deum* CWE 70 175–6.

35 The right side as the side of God's favour, a cross-cultural truism, is common in Scripture. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1625A–B cites Ps 16:8, but he might have added Pss 16:11, 110:1 and 5, 118:15–16, and many other places. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 311B–C remarks that good things regarding eternity are often announced on the right side, citing Prov 3:16. Bede and Ambrose are quoted by the *Gloss* and in the *Catena aurea* (on 1:11).

36 The frail human reaction of fear at the sight of an angel and the angelic response of soothing such a reaction are noted by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 4 PL 26 240A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 311C, the *Gloss* (on 1:13) quoting Bede, and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 696D–697B. The *Catena aurea* (on 1:11) adds a quotation from Chrysostom on the fearful reaction and quotes Origen on the angel's mild response; Hugh of St Cher (on 1:12) 128v expresses the same two ideas in other language, and Erasmus likewise uses terms of his own choosing. See also the

voice, the angel said, 'There is no reason to be afraid, Zechariah, but there is reason to be glad. For I bring happy news to you and to the entire people for whom you pray. God has smiled on your devout prayers. The Messiah long promised and expected now for many generations is going to come, the liberator and saviour of his people. And this is not the only request you made that has been granted; divine goodness adds to the accumulation of your prayers the thing you did not dare to ask for, because you had lost hope that it could happen. You asked for a redeemer; you will also receive the redeemer's herald. The fecundity of Elizabeth your wife, put off by divine intention, will pay you a huge interest of joys, and the public happiness of the entire people will be linked with the private celebration of your house. The fruitfulness for which you had lost hope will serve this purpose, that everyone will understand that it is no ordinary birth but that the child to be born will be born because God made it possible. Your wife will indeed bear you a child, but not for you alone; she will do it for all the people, she will do it for God, by whose providence the whole business is being directed. She will give birth the more miraculously in being past her time; the more commendably because hope had passed; the more blessedly because she will bear not just any son but the great herald and forerunner of the great Messiah, and a kind of pathbreaker and summoner.[37] He has been chosen for so high a duty by the freely granted favour of God, and therefore you shall call his name John, so that even by the name the people will be informed that he will be most pleasing to God and have divine gifts liberally heaped upon him.[38]

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paraphrase on 24:4 CWE 48 228, and the similar passages in the paraphrases on John 20:13 CWE 46 217 and on Mark 16:5–6 CWE 49 174.

37 'Pathbreaker and summoner' (*anteambulonem ac viatorem*), respectively a servant and a minor officer in Rome, the first of whom cleared a path through crowds for his distinguished master, Suetonius *Vespasian* 2; and the other brought or summoned persons to a magistrate, Cicero *De senectute* 16.56 and Livy 2.56.13.

38 Verse 1:14 in the Gospel allows it to appear that since the answer to Zechariah's prayer is that a son will be born to him, he had included his personal prayer with his prayers for the welfare of his people. Erasmus had already said that, while the content of a Jewish priest's prayers included himself (see the paraphrase on verse 10 above with n33), Zechariah had long since given up praying for a son. Following a line taken by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1625C, Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2 qu 1 PL 35 1333 divided the angel's reply to refer to two prayers, one expressed and one omitted: 'Your prayer has been answered' means the prayer for the welfare of the Jewish people, for the Messiah would soon be born; and the announcement of Elizabeth's son follows because that child would be the Messiah's herald. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 311C–D, the *Gloss* (on 1:13), and Hugh of St Cher (on 1:13) 128v follow the same

'And so the sorrow that your wife's barrenness has brought you till now will be compensated by rich joy and much exultation. And the joy will not be confined within the walls of your house. Many friends will rejoice at your joy who earlier grieved at your grief. All those who thirst for the coming of the Messiah will be glad at the birth of your son. Your son will precede the Messiah as the morning star runs its course before the sun, to announce with its wonderful light the imminent rising of the other, who will scatter the darkness of the whole world.[39]

'That one will be incomparably the greatest, indeed, but your son too, though lesser than he, will still surpass all the prophets before this time in honour. For he will truly be great, not just in the opinion of mortals but also in the eyes of the Lord, to whom no one is great except in the gifts that the Lord himself bestows. For he will not be great in riches, or in the clamour of life, or in an earthly kingdom, but in his scorn for these things, which make some great in mortal eyes; and the less he seeks the goods of this world, the

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line. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 697A–B suggests that the promise of a son who will acknowledge the Messiah implies the greater promise that the Messiah is coming; or else that 'your prayer has been heard' means the prayer for the people, and the promise of a son is a warranty of the answer to it. The *Catena aurea* (on 1:13) quotes Augustine and Theophylact along with a passage attributed to Chrysostom.

Erasmus rounds out his paraphrase with another statement of the function of this miraculous birth as a preliminary to the more miraculous one to follow; see the paraphrase on verse 5 with n17 above. His explanation of the name John, *deo gratissimum* 'most pleasing to God,' arises from Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 146: *in quo est gratia vel domini gratia* 'in whom is grace, or, the grace of the Lord.' But Erasmus' 'most pleasing to God' suggests that *gratia* here is more like 'favour' than 'free gift' and may be related to his view of *gratia plena* 'full of grace' in the angel's salutation to Mary; see the paraphrase on 1:28 with n61 there. Jerome is echoed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 312A, the *Gloss* (on 1:13), and *the Catena aurea* (on 1:13). Hugh of St Cher (on 1:13) 129r emphasizes John as an instrument of grace; Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:13) says the child will be named John 'because of his future holiness and the fitness of his service . . . because John made Christ manifest, through whom grace and truth came into being' (John 1:14).

39 The image of the lesser preceding light that will be extinguished by the greater light following picks up the end of the paraphrase on 1:5 (cf n17 above) and also anticipates the imagery of light often used of the Messiah, eg 1:76 paraphrased 65, with n125, 1:78–9, and 2:32, with the paraphrases on those passages, 66 and 84 below.

more richly will he have heaven's good things piled upon him.[40] But he will be so far from debauchery and other physical delights that he is never going to drink wine or strong drink, that is, anything that can steal prudence from a person.[41] For these base pleasures have no place in one whose breast the Holy Spirit occupies, and that Spirit will fill your son's mind even while he lies hidden in the folds of his mother's womb, so that he will play the part of a prophet in action before he can speak.[42]

'Soon, when the gifts of God's Spirit increase with his increasing age, he will do wonders, in both his model of a completely holy life and his marvellous preaching. Indeed, according to the prophecy of Malachi, many of the sons of Israel have become separated from God while, in reliance on the carnal Law, they neglect the things that the figures of the Law stand for. These he will turn back to the Lord their God, declaring quite plainly that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, urging them to repentance of their former life, rehearsing in his baptizing the wiping away of sins that will take place through the Messiah, finally pointing out to everyone the one whom God will send so that through that one eternal salvation will come about for all. That Messiah will come first in humble form in order to grant eternal salvation freely to all who believe in him. Then he will come again with majesty to render to each person the reward for his deeds – eternal life for the godly, eternal death for the unbelievers and ungodly. Moreover, just as according to Malachi's prophecy Elijah will be the forerunner of the second coming, to prepare the hearts of humankind by his preaching for that great and terrible day of the Lord, so your son will be the forerunner of the first coming, when God through his Son the Messiah will come down to earth, to invite

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40 Cf 7:26–8, Matt 11:11–14. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1626D similarly described how the Baptist would be great in the sight of the Lord not in the extension of empires or military victories but in the great power of mind that represses human pleasures and physical indulgence.

41 'Prudence' is *sobrietatem*, meaning here not only the opposite of drunkenness but sound or sensible thinking in general. Erasmus had used the same word in his paraphrase on Eph 5:18, where Paul makes a contrast between bodily drunkenness and spiritual inebriation, a passage cited by Bede on the present verse (who defines 'strong drink' as anything inebriating not made from grapes) *In Lucam expos* PL 92 312B–C. Cf CWE 43 344.

42 For the breast occupied by the Holy Spirit cf the paraphrase on Acts 1:14 CWE 50 10 with n76. The Baptist's prophetic action is leaping in his mother's womb upon the greeting of Mary to Elizabeth in 1:39, as pointed out by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 697C and Hugh of St Cher (on 1:15) 129r.

all humankind to knowledge and love of him through preaching; and for that reason he will be thought by some to be Elijah. And not without reason will he be called Elijah, who in the spirit and might of Elijah will precede the coming of the Lord, in order, as Malachi wrote, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their sons so that the Jews who had fallen so far away from the religion of their ancestors may repent and return to better ways.[43] Then, trusting in the words of the Messiah, through whom God will speak to them, they will truly deserve to be called sons of Abraham,[44] as long as they imitate Abraham's faith. As for those who, clinging to the husk of the Law, do not understand the Law's intent and force, at the same time he will turn them towards the wisdom of the righteous who have learned that something higher and more sacred is concealed under cover of the Law, something that will shortly be revealed by the preaching of the Messiah, who will complete the Law.[45] But your son, preceding the Messiah's heavenly preaching, will prepare the hearts of humankind so that he may hand over to the one who is coming a people not entirely unformed but already prepared and equipped[46] by recognition of their sins, anticipation of the heavenly kingdom, and longing for the Messiah's arrival. For so God thought it best, the groundwork and first steps already laid, to bring mortals along gradually, by degrees, since they had fallen into the depths of ignorance and impiety.'

As the angel spoke, Zechariah had already put aside his fear. But since the angel was making grand promises, and in the nature of things unbelievable ones, in the Jewish fashion and also as an image of the synagogue, Zechariah required some substance to be added to the promises by a sign,

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43 Here Erasmus draws on the prophecies in Malachi 3 and 4 and on the preaching of the Baptist as described in 3:2–22, Matthew 3, Mark 1:1–11, John 1:17–35.

44 For 'sons of Abraham' see 3:8; for Abraham's faith, Romans 4. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 313B cites here Rom 1:17 'The righteous man lives by faith.'

45 'Complete the Law' is *legem absolvet*: not 'abolish' but 'bring to fulfilment.' *Absolvere* is a common Latin term for bringing something to an end: a story or debt or lawsuit. See L&S at *absolvo*, and the paraphrase on 16:16–17 CWE 48 97 with n20; Erasmus dwells on the point at length in the paraphrase on Matt 5:17–45 CWE 45 95–111.

46 'Prepared and equipped' is *praeparatam et instructam*. In the annotation *plebem perfectam* (on 1:17; DV 'a perfect people') Erasmus had said that the Greek κατεσκευασμένον would be better translated as *instructam* 'equipped' and *adornatam* 'outfitted' or *apparatam* 'prepared, readied.'

so that by a miracle the miracle would gain credence.[47] He replied, therefore, to the angel as follows: 'By what proof here and now can I come to know that what you promise will be a sure thing hereafter? For otherwise your meaning contradicts nature. I am certainly aged myself, and my wife is too advanced in age for childbearing to be expected from her. How will old, worn-out people be recipients of what did not come to them when they were young and physically capable?'

Then the angel said, 'If a human being sent by a human being were making these promises to you, you would not be wrong to be doubtful about the promise. For I admit that what I promise is beyond human strength and out of the ordinary course of nature. But an angel cannot bring a false message, and nothing is so unbelievable among mortals that God does not easily provide it for those who believe in his promises. For I am the angel Gabriel, once sent to the prophet Daniel, and I stand ever in God's sight among the seven chief servants of heaven, ready for entire obedience to the divine will. Now I have been particularly assigned by God to play the part of intermediary between God and humankind in this matter, than which no other greater or more marvellous has ever been carried out.[48] For – lest you have some distrust – God is the author of this promise; I am a messenger sent by him to tell you these things and bring you happy news.

'Further, since you require it, you will be given what will be at one and the same time a proof of the future fulfilment of the promise and a penalty for your present distrust.[49] Behold, from this very moment you will be mute,

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47 Paul cites asking for signs as typical of Jews, 1 Cor 1:22; see also Matt 12:38, John 2:18.

48 Gabriel sent to Daniel: Dan 8:16–17 and 9:21. 'Stand ever in God's sight': Erasmus adds 'ever' to the Gospel text's present-tense verb 'I stand,' like Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 34 PL 76 1255A–B and Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 313D, who noted that the angels eternally stand in contemplation of the glory of God even when they are dispatched on temporal missions of carrying messages to mortals; so also Hugh of St Cher (on 1:19) 129v and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:19). For the seven angels in the presence of God, see Rev 8:2. 'Intermediary' is *internuntius*.

49 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 313C comments here that silence is for Zechariah both the sign of assurance that he asked for and the penalty he deserved for his disbelief. Bede is followed by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 1:20) and in different words by Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:18). Erasmus does not take up an idea found in Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 700C and Hugh of St Cher (on 1:22) 130r that

and you will not be able to say anything until the birth of your son redeems my pledge, about which there should have been no doubt. For the time is at hand for the unbelieving synagogue to fall silent and for no one to have a voice except those who with ready faith obey the gospel preaching.'

While this was going on between Zechariah and the angel in the inner sanctuary of the temple, all the people were waiting for the priest to come out, according to custom, to finish the remaining things before the multitude. They wondered why he was lingering in the sanctuary longer than usual. At last Zechariah came out to the people, his expression showing what was certainly an unusual joy; but he was unable to speak. From these facts the people understood that a vision had manifested itself to him inside. For meeting with powers and heavenly spirits normally alters the appearance of the human body, as once happened to Moses too.[50] What he could not express in language he indicated by nods: that the sacrifice had been successful; they should give thanks to God, who had heeded the prayers of his people. Now Zechariah remained in the temple, carrying out his duty in administering the sacred rites until the number of days was completed. Meanwhile, the Jewish people had a mute priest, a sign of the Law that was soon to cease and give way to him who, having proclaimed truth, would set aside foreshadowings of things.

But when the regular time of his service was complete, Zechariah went back to his home. There, relying on the angel's promises, he embraced his barren old Elizabeth; this indeed was not free time for sexual indulgence but longing for the child who would make God's glory bright by his life and preaching, and who would be the forerunner of the long-expected one who would at last bring perfect salvation for all. Chaste are the embraces of husband and wife whom a divine promise, not sexual indulgence, links. Sacred is the intercourse that seeks nothing but offspring. Godly is the desire for a child that is born not for ourselves but for general salvation.[51]

So then, after Elizabeth had conceived in accordance with the angel's promise, she hid herself from public view for five months, happy indeed

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Zechariah was rendered both speechless and deaf; in an annotation *et permansit mutus* (on 1:22) Erasmus expressed surprise that Valla *Annot in Lucam* thinks that *mutus* means only 'deaf,' whereas it can mean both 'deaf' and 'without speech.' Here he is careful to indicate a loss of speech.

50 Moses' altered appearance: Exod 34:29–35

51 For fuller light on Erasmus' views on the purpose of marriage, see the references in nn26 and 58. The emphasis on marriage's having children as its goal, of which the necessary, if perhaps regrettable, means is sexual intercourse, is an important topic of Augustine's *Sermones de scripturis* 51.22 PL 38 346.

about the conception but, as befits a modest uprightness, a little embarrassed that (to those who did not yet know that all this was happening because God wished it so) she could seem, old woman though she was, still to be making time for sexual indulgence. For she knew quite well how inclined the common run of humanity is to evil suspicions and evil talk. Her woman's heart also considered it sensible that the gift of God not be flaunted before people until it was a sure thing, for fear that if anything went wrong, the reproach of barrenness would be doubled because of an old woman's vain hope for a child.[52] But as soon as she knew by definite signs that she was pregnant, she took joy in her happy state in such a way that she attributed the whole strange business to the goodness of God. 'Until now,' she said, 'I was reproached in the eyes of the Israelites as barren and past my time, for to them a barren body is more shameful than an evil heart. But as I see, the Lord has postponed my fruitfulness so that the child when it is born will not only remove the reproach of barrenness from me but also bring a fuller joy, beyond my expectation. For it is clearly the gift of God, who at the time that he thought best deigned to have regard for his handmaiden, because from now on, in this single yet remarkable child of my old age, that I have conceived for God, I will be called a mother more blessed than many who make their husbands rich with an abundance of offspring.'[53]

Matters having reached this state, it remained for the more sacred and greater part of this mystery to be arranged through the angel: that is, what had never been heard of since the creation of the world, and never would be heard of in later ages, that the Son of God, himself God immortal, would be born a mortal human being from a human virgin. So when the time established from eternity drew near, the time when God through his Son would free the whole world from the tyranny of death and sin, he

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52 Origen *Hom in Lucam* PL 26 243C–244A and Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1631A–1632C say that Elizabeth hid herself out of embarrassment about the appearance of sexual appetite at her age; Ambrose notes that sexual intimacy is appropriate for young couples but lessens once they are rearing children (though it is still permissible then), and old people give it up as being sheer intemperance when the hope of offspring is past; he also says that the response of the child in her womb to Mary's greeting (1:44) tells Elizabeth that the pregnancy is assured. Ambrose is followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 314D, the *Gloss* (on 1:24), Hugh of St. Cher (on 1:24) 130r, the *Catena aurea* (on 1:24), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:24). Erasmus apparently dates Elizabeth's confidence in her condition earlier; see just below and the paraphrase on verse 36, 46.

53 Erasmus expands Elizabeth's words of joy in terms that allude ('have regard for his handmaiden' *ancillam suam respicere*) to the songs of Hannah, 1 Sam 2:1–10, Mary, Luke 1:48, and perhaps Ps 113:9.

sent the same angel, Gabriel, as a sort of groomsman and matchmaker for the divine union with the virgin.[54] This took place in the sixth month from Elizabeth's conceiving.[55]

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54 'Groomsman' is *paranymphum* and 'matchmaker' *conciliatorem*. With this double description of Gabriel's role in the Incarnation Erasmus reaffirms a position he had taken in the *1516* annotation *quae cum audisset* (on 1:29; repeated in *1519*) 'when she heard this' – reading a Greek participle no longer usually accepted in modern texts; see Nestle-Aland's notes on this verse. There he had described Mary's concern at the angel's opening words as arising from hearing 'his loving address, which somehow suggested that of a suitor' (*salutationem amatoriam et nescioquid procorum prae se ferentem*). For this he was taken to task by the young English theologian Edward Lee, who was offended by both the implication that the Virgin was thinking impure thoughts and Erasmus' language suggesting courtship, and who said so in print. Erasmus defended himself in his *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* Note 32 (1520; repr 1522 and 1540) CWE 72 134–5. He built his case chiefly on Ambrose's description in various works of the typical chaste maiden's care for the preservation of her virginity (see n59 and the notes on the passage in CWE 72) and on the description of Gabriel's preparatory function in the conception by John of Damascus *De fide orthodoxa* 3.2 PG 94 985A–B, quoted, he observed, by Peter Lombard *Sententiae* III 3.1 PL 192 761. Cf n75. His annotation was considerably expanded in *1527*. *Paranymphus* is a Latin transliteration of a Greek word whose native Latin equivalent is *pronubus*; it describes the male friend of the groom who delivers a woman to her new husband. The Latinized Greek form is used of human groomsmen eg in Ambrose *Ep* 19.18 PL 16 1029D–1030A (of Samson in Judg 14:20) and Augustine *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum* qu 75 PL 34 586 (on the peculiar relation of Abraham and Isaac to Abimelech, Genesis 20 and 26) and *De civitate Dei* PL 41 188 and 426 (on the customary departure of everyone, even the *paranymphi*, from the bridal chamber). For its application to Gabriel, going back possibly to Augustine, see Erasmus' poem 110 CWE 85 290 and 86 657 n238, an ode to the Virgin from Erasmus' early years (CWE 86 646–8). *Conciliator* in classical Rome describes a man, usually a family friend or political ally, who arranges an upper-class marriage or a diplomatic alliance by marriage; see Nepos *Atticus* 12.2, Suetonius *Augustus* 48, and Tacitus *Annales* 1.58. Later it or its feminine form means 'matchmaker,' man or woman, for marriages or other sexual transactions. See L&S at *conciliator*.

55 At this point Erasmus begins the paraphrase on the part of the Gospel that focuses on the role of Mary (and to a lesser degree Joseph). From early times the place of Mary in the thinking, preaching, and liturgy of the church had expanded far beyond the narrative in Matthew's and Luke's Gospels – a fact reflected in part in the controversies sparked by Erasmus' views on the text of these chapters and their interpretation. For general surveys of the Marian tradition, see eg Marina Warner *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York 1976) and Jaroslav Pelikan *Mary through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven 1996). For Erasmus' own approach, spanning his lifetime, in devotional rather than exegetical contexts, see his several

A young maiden had been chosen for this celestial business, recommended not by wealth, nor by a brilliant family name, nor by the clamour of life, nor by other things that this world generally admires, but endowed with the remarkable spiritual gifts that recommend a person in God's sight: purity, modesty, godliness. She lived in a small and unremarkable city, Nazareth in Galilee (a people despised among the Jews). She was a virgin engaged to a man in no way noteworthy according to worldly standards, but of a spirit commendable to God in its virtues, a carpenter by trade.[56] His name was Joseph, a descendant of the line of David, from which his bride also traced her family, so that the facts would match the prophecy that had promised a Messiah from the tribe of King David.[57] So then: the virgin's name was Mary. God had chosen humble people so that the world could not claim anything for itself in this matter. He had chosen a pair joined in chaste marriage[58] so

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poems about her or addressed to her in CWE 85 and 86; his *Paean Virgini Matri* and *Obsecratio ad Virginem Mariam* addressed to her, along with his *Liturgia Virginis Matris* prepared for the Holy House at Loreto soon after the completion of this *Paraphrase* and the prayer to the Virgin Mother in his 1535 booklet of prayers for young people, *Precationes*, all in CWE 69, with the comments of John O'Malley in the Introduction to that volume, xii–xvi; and further in Erasmus' catechism, the *Explanatio symboli* (published in 1533) CWE 70 240–93.

56 Joseph's occupation as carpenter or builder (*faber*) is not given in the Gospel here; cf Matt 13:55 and Mark 6:3.

57 Mary's descent is not given in Scripture, but it was believed on the basis of Num 36:5–9 that Jewish law required that marriages must be made within the same tribe and family; therefore, the tribal and familial affiliation of one marital partner was also that of the other. This explanation is found in the 'Proto-Gospel of James,' n79, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 2 PG 57 27–8, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 1 PL 26 24B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 316C, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 701C, the *Catena aurea* (on 1:29), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:27), who adds a reference to Num 36:8. For the prophecy, several OT passages are interpreted in this way, among them 2 Sam 7:12–16, Ps 89:3–4 and 19–37, Ps 132:17, Isa 7:10–15 and 9:6–7, Jer 23:5–6 and 33:14–16. Cf also the song of Zechariah, 1:68–70 and its paraphrase, 61.

58 'In chaste marriage' (*casto coniugio*) here means marriage without sexual relations, as endorsed by Paul, 1 Cor 7:1–7 and 25–35; see Erasmus' paraphrases on these passages, CWE 43 86–91 and 102–6. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1636B says that marriage is constituted not by the sexual act but by public witnessing of the marriage and celebration of the wedding. Augustine, citing Mary and Joseph as examples, argues on several occasions that the essence of marriage lies in the conjugal linking of hearts and minds, not in the physical fact of sexual relations; see eg his *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* 1 PL 44 420–1, *Sermones de scripturis* 51 PL 38 345, and *Contra Faustum* 23.3 PL 35 470–1. Erasmus' reasons for the divine choice of a pair in chaste marriage summarize similar lists in Origen

that the secret of the virgin birth would be concealed till the right moment, and so there would be no lack of a suitable witness to an otherwise unbelievable fact: that a virgin had given birth without union with a man.

When this girl was in her chamber spending her time in contemplation of heavenly things (as virginity is fond of privacy[59]), the angel Gabriel, visible in much light, came to her and spoke to her in a strange form of address: 'Hail and rejoice,[60] maiden uniquely dear and favoured:[61] you have a Lord

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Hom in Lucam 6 PL 26 244B–245A, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1633A–1635A, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 1 PL 26 24B–C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 316C–D, the *Gloss* (on 1:27), the *Catena aurea* (on 1:27), and in much more detail Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:27). At the end of the paraphrase on verse 35, 46, Gabriel will add a further reason to the present list, one also found in Origen and Ambrose.

59 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1636A mentions that Mary was alone in the inner part of the house so as not to be seen by a man. Origen *Hom in Lucam* 6 PL 26 246A says that she had knowledge of the Law and meditated daily on the prophets. Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:28) quotes Bernard's comment that the verb 'entered' means the angel entered her private chamber, where behind locked doors she prayed to her Father in secret. For her activity at this moment, whether prayer or sacred reading (the latter a commonplace of illustrations of the Annunciation), see n70.

60 'Hail and rejoice' is *ave et gaude*. Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 1:28) 830 had noted that the Latin *ave* was nothing more than a synonym for *salve* 'greetings' but the Greek word they both translate is χαῖρε, which means *gaude* 'rejoice.' Erasmus in his annotation *ave gratia plena* (on 1:28) refines this to indicate that any of the three Latin words can be used as a translation of the Greek; in the paraphrase he combines the familiar *ave* with the *gaude* that a Greekless reader might not have been aware of.

61 'Uniquely dear and favoured' is *gratiosa et favorabilis*. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 701D says the Greek participle κεχαριτωμένη implies 'you have found favour in God's sight.' In the annotation cited in the previous note, Erasmus, following Valla, said that *gratia plena* does not mean 'full of grace' but rather 'having become pleasing' *gratificata*; he compares the Greek here with the active form of the same verb in Eph 1:6b. He cites Homer *Iliad* 5.243, *Odyssey* 4.71, etc, who uses the related expression ἐμῷ κεκαρισμένε θυμῷ 'dear to my heart.' In a *1522* addition to the annotation Erasmus explains further: only someone whom we wholeheartedly embrace with a sort of unearned favour will be called κεχαριτωμένος; hence in Latin those whom we favour with a heartfelt enthusiasm are called *gratiosi* 'uniquely dear.' His *1516* annotation went on to say that the expression is rather like someone announcing love for a maiden, because 'it has something of a blandishing tone' (*quiddam blandum sonat*). The thrust of his argument seems to be that Mary's qualities of purity, modesty (in the sense of 'knowing one's place'), and godliness, together with the humbleness of her social station (all mentioned at her introduction, in the paragraph preceding this one in the translation) have drawn the Lord's favour to her. In contrast are

favourable and propitious to you. And for this reason you shall be uniquely famous and of a name that shall be much praised among all women.'[62]

But at the sudden sight of an angel and the strange and unheard-of form of greeting that she heard,[63] since she herself had no particularly high

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comments like Origen's, *Hom in Lucam* 6 PL 26 245D–246A, that the expression *gratia plena* is not used as a greeting elsewhere in Scripture, or the comments in the *Gloss* (on 1:28) attributed to Gregory, explaining *gratia plena* as marking such events in the story as her being the first woman to offer her virginity to God and her giving birth to the source of grace for the whole world. Hugh of St Cher (on 1:28) 131v repeats the observation that this is a form of greeting unparalleled in Scripture. He adds (132r) that Mary is full of grace in God's eyes because of her humility, in the angels' view because of her virginity, and to mortals because of her fecundity; he also quotes Prov 11:16 'a "gracious [*gratiosa*]" – that is, full of grace [*gratia plena*] – "woman shall find glory,"' and discusses *plenus gratia* describing Stephen in Acts 6:8. The *Catena aurea* (on 1:28) quotes 'a Greek' who says that the greeting 'full of grace' shows that she is recognized as worthy of betrothal, for the fact that she is fruitful in graces is a kind of bride gift or dowry. Erasmus' NT translation substituted *gratiosa* for *gratia plena*; this and the annotation promptly drew the ire of Edward Lee (n54); for Erasmus' answer to him, see CWE 72 136–7.

62 In the Vulgate text of 1:28, until modern times, the verse continued 'blessed are you among women' (*benedicta tu in mulieribus*), borrowed from Elizabeth's greeting at 1:42 and part of the prayer 'Hail, Mary' (*Ave Maria*); see the notes in Nestle-Aland. In the annotation *benedicta tu* (on 1:28) Erasmus had explained that the Greek εὐλογημένη translated by *benedicta* actually means 'praised' or 'of glorious reputation,' but that it was not worth the inevitable protests to change the familiar NT text. Here he exercises the greater freedom of paraphrase. In the following annotation on *in mulieribus* he states a preference for *inter* 'among' rather than *in* 'in,' though he admits that the Latin *in* sometimes can mean *inter*. Both his NT text and the paraphrase on the verse have *inter*. Either preposition still leaves an ambiguity noted by Hugh of St Cher (on 1:28) 132v – blessed *above* all other women or blessed *by* all other women?

63 'Sudden sight' and 'form of greeting that she heard.' Both Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 1:29) 830 and Erasmus in the annotation *quae cum audisset* (on 1:29) pointed out that the Greek verb being used in the texts they had means 'saw,' not the Vulgate's 'heard.' Valla had rather coyly declined to express a preference for one of these two possibilities, and in the annotation Erasmus had judged that Luke intended to show that Mary was perturbed by both the angel's appearance and his mode of address, an interpretation that he follows here. Over the printing history of his *Annotations* Erasmus enlarged this one note considerably, citing the authorities listed in n65, defending his view, and in particular citing Ambrose and 'a Greek' quoted in the *Catena aurea* on this verse to show that he himself was hardly the first to suggest that there was an erotic overtone to the angel's greeting – a possibility that had been raised already by his comments in the preceding annotation, *ave gratia plena*. Cf n54.

opinion of herself, the maiden was rather perturbed in spirit. For it was natural to her virginal and tender shyness that she was alarmed at the unexpected entry of a young male person.[64] That she did not answer immediately but silently turned over in her mind what so novel and grand a greeting might mean was owing partly to her prudence, partly to her modesty.[65]

Now since what she was debating with herself did not escape the angel, he did not let her be in uncertainty any longer but both took away her dread by his gentle speech and explained the reason for his unusual greeting. 'There is no reason,' he said, 'for you to be afraid, Mary; your possession of what you especially love, your treasured virginity, is safe.[66] Nor am I trying to soften you with a meaningless greeting. I have come to you as the messenger of a very happy and very great matter. Do not weigh your merits against it. What is offered is the result of divine favour, not of your merit.[67] You are pleasing to the Lord exactly because you are not overpleased with yourself.

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64 'Of a young male person' is *formae juvenalis*, added in *1534*.

65 'That she did not answer . . . modesty.' Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1636A–C remarks on the behaviour of unmarried girls, who are timid and alarmed at every approach of a man and frightened by a man's speaking to them. He cites Mary's exemplary behaviour in her confusion at the angel's address, praising her silent reserve and her prudence as she considers the unheard-of salutation not found elsewhere in Scripture. He is quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 317A; both are quoted by the *Gloss* (on 1:29) and followed by Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:29). Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 701D supposes Mary to be wondering whether this is just the impertinence of a young man's way with a girl or, since mention was made of the Lord, whether it is something divine. Hugh of St Cher (on 1:29) 132v says her silence is based on maidenly shame and wisdom, and itself implies the question ('How can this be?') she puts in 1:34. The *Catena aurea* (on 1:29) quotes Ambrose on the timidity of unmarried girls and 'a Greek' on Mary's modesty and prudence, and on her wondering about a carnal or divine meaning in the salutation.

66 For human fear and angelic soothing, see 30 and n36. The *Catena aurea* (on 1:30) quotes 'a Greek' who interprets the angel's 'Do not fear, Mary' as meaning 'I have not come to rob you of your inviolable virginity; I am an arranger of betrothals (*sponsalium tractator*), not a plotter of ambushes.' For Erasmus' view of Mary's perpetual virginity, also discussed in chapter 2 80, cf the colloquy *Inquisitio de fide* 'An Examination concerning the Faith' (1524) CWE 39 425 with n42.

67 This sentence was criticized by Noël Béda. Erasmus replied to him in *Supputatio* prop 48 LB IX 597D–600F, where he explains Scripture's rhetorical device of saying 'not X but Y' as a way to emphasize the importance of Y without completely excluding X – in other words, he is not denying that Mary has merits, only that human merits, gifts from God though they are, can never 'earn' gifts of grace like this one. In the same way, he said, he paraphrased 'he will be called

Let it be enough for you that you have met with grace and favour from God.[68] Listen to a thing unheard-of but true.

'You will conceive a child in your womb, and you will bear a son and call his name Jesus, because he will bring salvation to his people.[69] But though born of lowly origins, of a lowly girl, by his divine powers he will be great in every way, so much so that after he becomes known to the world he is to be called not a prophet but Son of the Most High. That name will be greater than human measure, because what is to be born will be more sublime than the human condition. In him the Lord God will make good what a prophecy not unknown to you has promised:[70] a son born of David's stock shall sit on his forefather's throne. He will not use earthly resources to seize a temporary kingdom on earth as his own. His heavenly Father will give him David's heavenly kingdom, and he will reign over the men of Israel forever. Nor will there come any end of his kingdom, as the prophet Isaiah foretold' [Isa 9:7].

The virgin's mind grew no more presumptuous from the angel's grand promises, nor did she develop any distrust from the elevated subject matter. She did not suppose that she too would reign with her son in his reign. She was well aware that nothing is so hard that God cannot accomplish it with just a nod. She was only anxious about her dearly treasured virginity. Therefore she did not require a sign from the angel, as Zechariah had done. She only sought, modestly and sensibly, to learn from the angel the manner of doing the thing, replying like this: 'How will it happen that I shall bear a son, since, while I am espoused to a man and am now living with him, he and

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Son of the Most High' (verse 32) as 'he will be called not a prophet but Son of the Most High,' though in fact some had called Jesus a prophet.

68 'You have met with' is *nacta es*. In the annotation *qualis esset* (on 1:29) Erasmus had drawn a distinction between the Vulgate's *invenisti* 'you have found' and two other Latin verbs, *repperisti* and *nacta es* (from *nanciscor*), to translate the Greek verb εὕρες (from εὑρίσκω), which he says applies both to a lost thing one looks for (not applicable here) and to something one happens upon without having searched for it. He observes that the sense of the expression is 'It has befallen you to be dear in the sight of God.' He uses one of his preferred verbs here.

69 The explanation of the name is added from Matt 1:21.

70 'A prophecy not unknown to you.' Many exegetes, starting with Origen *Hom in Lucam* 6 PL 26 246A, say that Mary knew the Law and the prophets, and meditated on them (cf 1:28–9 and the paraphrase there). But on verse 34 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1639B–C, followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 318C and the *Gloss* (on 1:34) quoting Bede, says that she had *read* that a virgin would conceive (Isa 7:14). Erasmus does not specify the means of her knowledge. Cf n65.

I do not have marital relations? For chastity pleases us both, and we would wish, if it were possible, this blessed state to be permanent.'[71]

So the angel explained the method and took away the virgin's anxiety about her virginity. 'Nothing here, maiden,' he said, 'will be done in the common course of nature. The birth will be heavenly and will be accomplished by way of the heavenly Workman.[72] You will continue to honour your chaste spouse with chaste love. A most blessed fruitfulness will come to you without any loss of virginity. For a spouse has not been given to you so that he can make you a mother or you him a father. Rather, God's providence has willed that care be taken in this way for your untouched state, your reputation, and the tranquillity owed to your virginity. It is God's will that there be a most reliable witness to the unusual birth; he did not want you to be without someone devoted in chaste companionship and loyal services to you and the child who will be born. And finally, by this arrangement he wanted the mystery hidden from disbelievers, and hidden also from godless spirits.[73]

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71 The favourable comparison of Mary's response with Zechariah's, based on her unquestioning faith that the incredible promise would be fulfilled and her only question being about the method of its accomplishment, is made by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1639A, followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 318C, the *Gloss* (on 1:34), and the *Catena aurea* (on 1:34). That her concern is to preserve her virginity is a recurring theme in the exegetes at this point. For the tradition that the marriage of Mary and Joseph was without sexual relations, see n58; also Matt 1:25 and the paraphrase on that verse, CWE 45 43. That the desire for a chaste marriage was shared by both Mary and Joseph is reported as the view of 'Catholic doctors' by Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:34). For the extrascriptural tradition of the prenuptial intention of both parties to maintain a chaste marriage, see the 'Proto-Gospel of James' and the *Golden Legend* (n79). Erasmus presents the shared wish for a permanently chaste marriage in the form of a contrary-to-fact or ideal condition ('if it were possible'), implying that Mary is willing to surrender that wish if the Lord requires it.

72 'Workman' is *opifice*, the ablative of *opifex* 'workman, craftsman.' The word was used to refer to God the Creator by Hilary of Poitiers and later writers (see Alexander Souter *A Glossary of Later Latin to 600 AD* [Oxford 1949] at *opifex*), but it appears here as instrumental (ablative alone) rather than in a form denoting the person by whom the action is authorized or executed (ablative with the preposition *ab*, not in the Latin here). Erasmus refers below to a workshop (*officina*) and to workmanship (*opificium*) in reference to the Holy Spirit. So it seems better to take *opifex* also as the same aspect or Person of the Deity, corresponding to the 'Spirit' of verse 35 and distinct from the 'Most High' of that verse.

73 Foreshadowing a theme he will use in chapter 4, in the account of Jesus' temptation by the devil, Erasmus adds here a reason for the marriage of Joseph and Mary that, according to Origen, had already been given by Ignatius: a birth that appears to take place in the normal way will not seem to evil spirits to be the

'This holy union of the divine nature with the human will not violate but consecrate your chastity. The heavenly Father has determined to beget his Son again, in a new way, from you.[74] Nor will there be any necessity for the seed of a mortal man to effect the divine conception. The Holy Spirit will glide into you from heaven above, and in your womb, as in a celestial workshop, will carry out the construction of the sacred infant; and in place of the physical embrace of a husband, the Most High will overshadow you, so moderating his immeasurable power to the limits of human nature that it can endure the congress.[75] When lust interferes in intercourse, what is born is born impure and in bondage to sin.[76] But as for what will be born from you, since it will be conceived from the most holy embrace of the Most High, from the workmanship of the Holy Spirit, who makes all things holy, and from a most pure virgin whom, alone free from every stain of sin, God chose for this very purpose, it will immediately be holy, just as it will be conceived.

'And because of his human body, derived from the substance of your body, he will rightly be called Son of a virgin and Son of Man; but once the

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special work of God. See Origen *Hom in Lucam* 6 PL 26 244C–245A and n58, with the exegetes cited there.

74 For the double begetting, here and in the following paragraph, of the Son of God, once in eternity and once in time, cf the beginning of the *Paraphrase on John* CWE 46 13–17, especially 16–17 (starting at 'This is no birth in time').

75 The description of the respective roles of the Spirit, who prepares the human vessel to endure the life-giving power of the Almighty, and the Most High owes much to the description of Jesus' conception by John of Damascus, also quoted in Peter Lombard's textbook of scholastic theology, the *Sententiae*. See n54. Similarly on the 'overshadowing,' taken to mean the moderation of divine power in contact with human flesh, see Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 318D–319A, and the *Gloss* (on 1:35), quoted by Hugh of St Cher (on 1:35) 134r.

76 This sentence provoked criticism from Noël Béda, who saw it as denying belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary (which did not become official doctrine in the Roman church until 1854, though its roots go back almost a millennium earlier; see the ODCC at 'Immaculate Conception'). Erasmus replied in the *Supputatio* LB IX 600F–601A on theological and rhetorical grounds: though some persons may have been born without original sin, they were not clean as Christ is clean, just as human righteousness cannot be compared to the righteousness of God. Besides, a general statement of what is true is not invalidated by a single exception, not even the church's description of the Conception of the Virgin. When the angel says that Mary's childbearing will produce something holy, he has in mind the difference between this and the children born by normal human reproduction. For conflicts concerning the doctrine in Erasmus' day and his own views, see CWE 40 1020–1 n51, commenting on part of the colloquy *Exequiae seraphicae* 'The Seraphic Funeral' (1531).

mystery of this birth is known, he will be called not son of Joseph but Son of God – not indeed in the ordinary way, as righteous people cleansed of their sins and justified by God's grace are called sons of God by adoption.[77] But in a unique sense he will be called Son of God, from whom he is truly twice born: once from the beginning, eternal from the eternal, and now in time, mortal from a mortal mother, human from a human being.[78] What is more, just as in this union the divine nature will be bonded together with human nature, so the child will reflect the nature of each parent. This mystery of the divine purpose is too sublime to be grasped even by angels. It is enough for you to show a mind that is trusting and ready to obey. He who can do whatever he wills will carry out the rest as he sees fit.

'Now, so that your joy may be more complete and your faith more certain, take a fresh example from close at hand. See, your relative Elizabeth, the old woman of lamented barrenness, beyond all hope, beyond natural capability, at my announcing it has conceived a son who will be the herald of your child. The conception has been assured for some time now; her womb is swelling, the baby is alive and moving. For this is her sixth month from the time when she conceived, though she was widely called barren even before she grew old; by now she is too old for there to be any hope of a child, even if she had not been barren already.

'This seemed best to God so that everyone may understand that nothing is so unbelievable among mortals that God's power cannot do it if he wishes. He will give a conception to a virgin as easily as he gave it to a barren woman – except that he wanted your example to be unique because your child will be unique. Several barren women have given birth, but to nothing other than human beings. No virgin before now has given birth, and none will after you, because once and once only will there be born one individual who embraces within himself divine and human nature.'

When Gabriel finished saying this, the maiden replied in a few words, but ones that bore witness to her exemplary modesty of spirit, along with her exemplary faith and devotion: 'I know,' she said, 'that it has been promised through the mouth of Isaiah that a virgin would conceive and bear a son; and I have no doubt that God can do everything that he wishes and will not fail in his promises. But if he thought it best to choose me, the lowliest girl of

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77 For 'sons of God by adoption' cf Rom 8:15–17 and 23, Gal 4:5, Eph 1:5 (Vulg, DV, AV, NRSV). Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:35) makes the same point, that the child will be called a son not by adoption but by nature.

78 Erasmus' triple description of the sonship of the infant alludes to the style of the Nicene Creed: 'God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God.'

all, to serve this mystery, there is no reason why I should claim either merit or special favour from it; it will be entirely a matter of divine goodness, of divine will. I only offer myself as a handmaiden to the Lord to whom I have been once and for all dedicated, ready for every obedience.[79] I trust in what you promise, and I hope that it may happen to me as you promise, as soon as possible.'

And with that statement the heavenly conception was imperceptibly carried out:[80] she had the Son of God in her womb, she was filled with the Holy Spirit. And soon the angel left her. Because that first deadly conversation between a maiden and a serpent had brought the seedbed of destruction into the world, God wished the business of the restoration of the human race to take its beginning from this sacred conversation between a virgin and an angel.[81]

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79 'To whom I have been once and for all dedicated.' According to the extremely widespread story of Mary's birth and upbringing as found in the 'Proto-Gospel of James' (AD mid-second century), Mary was dedicated to God before her birth and at age three was taken to the temple, where she lived until she was twelve (or fourteen, in other versions) and was betrothed to Joseph. An English translation of this 'Proto-Gospel' can be found in Bart Ehrman *Lost Scriptures: Books That Did Not Make It into the New Testament* (Oxford 2003) 63–7, and discussion of it in idem *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faith We Never Knew* (Oxford 2003) 207. A derivative version is in Jacobus de Voragine *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints* trans William Granger Ryan (Princeton 1993) II 149–53, no 131: The Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The same tradition formulates the Immaculate Conception of Mary, expressed just above ('a most pure virgin') and at n76.

80 'With that statement' (*simul cum dicto*). *Dicto* refers to the whole reply Mary made to the angel. Erasmus makes it clear that her expression of consent is integral to the operation of the Holy Spirit. The consent and the conception are similarly linked in Ambrose, *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1639C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 320A, the *Gloss* (on 1:38–9) quoting Bede, the *Catena aurea* (on 1:38) quoting Ambrose, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:38–9).

81 The polarized contrast of a primary figure of the OT and a primary figure of the salvation narrative echoes many in the traditional exegetes, beginning with Paul 1 Cor 15:22 and 45. Its expression in the nativity story in terms of Eve and Mary can be found as early as Irenaeus *Contra Haereses* PG 7 1175A–1176A, and eg in Pseudo-Chrysostom *In Matthaeum* hom 1 PG 56 634, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 701C–704A, and Bede *Hom in Annuntiationem* PL 94 9B, quoted in the *Catena aurea* (on 1:26–7), along with a quotation from 'a Greek' that as a human pair once brought in sin, the divine and human pair now bring a blessing. See the paraphrase on 3:38 122–4 with n67; also CWE 48 229 with n10 in the long expansion of 24:27 CWE 69 41 n2, Warner *Alone of All Her Sex* 50–67, and Pelikan *Mary through the Centuries* 39–52, n55 above.

A few days later, having become by divine gift more modest and dutiful, Mary left her house and set out with all due speed for the hill country, to the city of Judah where Zechariah lived. For she had learned from the angel's words that her cousin Elizabeth was now six months pregnant. And entering Zechariah's house, she greeted and congratulated her cousin.

True godliness surely rejoices in the happiness of another rather than being eager to boast of its own. Virginity loves secrecy; it is not drawn out from the innermost parts of the house unless duty calls. In public it moves quickly; in its duties it is less hasty. On her whole journey Mary greeted no one until she had reached Elizabeth.[82] And indeed that was no ordinary greeting. The happiness of each increased from the congratulations they exchanged, the power of the divine Spirit overflowed. Mary carried in her womb the source of all spiritual gifts, and now from the inspiration of her baby she completely breathed divinity. So it happened that as soon as the maiden's greeting touched Elizabeth's ears, the infant that the old woman carried in her womb leaped up as if transported with joy. John, not yet born, was aware of the divine power of his just-conceived Lord, and within the confines of his mother's womb proclaimed in his movement the one whom someday he would proclaim with his words.

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Erasmus makes the conversations between each pair, not the physical coupling, the point of comparison.

82 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1640C notes that Mary's speedy journey to Elizabeth is motivated not by disbelief or uncertainty but by happiness in what she herself has been promised, consideration for the duty she owes her elder kinswoman, and joy at Elizabeth's condition. He then comments (1640D–1641B) on Mary as a model for the behaviour of unmarried girls towards pregnant kinswomen, for she is not slowed by modesty or desire for solitude or the difficulty of the journey – or by hanging about in public places or getting involved in conversations with other people; further, the younger woman came to the elder and was the first to speak: Mary knew how to defer to her elders, though in honour she outranked Elizabeth. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 320A and the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 1:39) all draw to some degree on different parts of Ambrose's remarks.
Erasmus' comment here that on her journey Mary spoke to no one earned the scorn of Noël Béda because it represents nothing in the text of Luke, whereas Scripture specifically makes the point in other instances, as in the instructions to Gehazi (2 Kings 4:29) or to Jesus' disciples later on (Luke 10:4). Erasmus replied in the *Supputatio* LB IX 601A–C that the instruction in those cases is only an indication of the speed with which people are to travel and a reminder to avoid distraction from their appointed task; it is in this sense that he here says 'greeted no one,' not meaning that Mary said no goodbyes or did not stop to rest when necessary.

And Elizabeth felt the exultant dance of her infant to good effect;[83] through the divinely inspired baby the mother was inspired too, and all things were caught up in a blissful contagion.[84] By way of Mary's voice, divine might penetrated to Elizabeth's baby; by way of the baby caught up by inspiration, its mother too was inspired, so that she too, filled with the Holy Spirit, no longer held back the joys of her heart, which she had silently kept hidden, concealing her pregnancy out of shame, but in a loud voice that great emotion provided she cried out, pouring forth by inspiration of the Spirit things that she could not surmise from the swelling of a belly and that she had not learned from any human being. Just as if she had heard the angel talking with Mary, she began her congratulations with the angel's words: 'O blessed virgin,' she said, 'you will attain the chief praise among all praiseworthy women.[85] And likewise sacred will be the fruit of your virgin womb, from which that marvellous flower will come forth who will be proclaimed throughout the whole world in the voice of all nations, about whom the prophets once sang; and he will attain the chief praise among all in heaven and all on earth.[86] I recognize it; there is something greater than a human being that you enclose in the bridal chamber of your womb.

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83 'Exultant dance' is *tripudium*, a word originally denoting the ritual stamping dance of an order of pagan Roman priests and taken over by Christians for physical expressions of (often) spiritual joy. See eg Esther 8:16 (Vulg) and the end of the next note.

84 The dynamic flow of the Holy Spirit, from the just-conceived Jesus, who has already filled his mother with that Spirit, to the unborn John, to John's mother's acknowledgment of Mary, and back to Mary's song of praise beginning in verse 46, is a theme that continues through the beginning of the paraphrase on that verse. The theme is remarked on by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 7 PL 26 247B–C, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1641B–C, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 320C and the *Gloss* (on 1:41, 43, and 45); Hugh of St Cher (on 1:41–2) 135r, and the *Catena aurea* (on 1:40–1) quoting Ambrose and 'a Greek.' The quotation from 'a Greek' includes the rhetorical question *quis unquam novit tripudium nativitate antiquius?* 'Who ever heard of an exultant dance earlier than a birth?' See the preceding note.

85 See the end of n62, on the part of the angel's greeting in verse 28 no longer read in modern texts. Here, like the interlinear *Gloss* (on 1:42), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 709D–710A, and Hugh of St Cher (on 1:42) 135r, Erasmus takes the Gospel's 'among women' to mean '*above* all praiseworthy women.'

86 Mary is identified as the shoot from the stem of Jesse and the fruit of her womb as the flower that will come from Jesse's root in Isa 11:1 (Vulg) by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1642A.

In *1523* and *1524* this sentence was marred by the misplacement of the clause 'from which ... come forth' and the omission of the 'who' in 'who will be

'If age alone is considered in us, it is quite fitting for a young girl to come to an old woman; but if the rank of our babies is considered, it was my duty to hurry to you. Certainly I was blessed enough that by divine favour I carry a child who will be something great some day; but by what merit of my own has so much blessedness befallen me that she who will be the mother of my Lord has voluntarily come to me?[87]

'In fact, I perceived the coming of my Lord by an indisputable proof. For see, as soon as the words of your greeting rang in my ears, I felt the child leaping in my womb as if rejoicing to meet his Lord and to show the service of honour owed to him. You, of course, the mother, are a match for your baby. He, the Lord, deigns to visit his servant, to sanctify him and fill him with the Holy Spirit. You, so much greater in rank, do not find it burdensome to come to one lesser than you, conducting yourself as much more humbly as you excel her in divine gifts, which you quite properly do not ascribe to your own merits because they come from God's freely given goodness. In this respect you are assuredly blessed, that you had no distrust of the angel's promises, however unbelievable.[88] You have conceived without a man's action, and it is certain that in the same trust all the rest that the angel pledged in the name of the Lord will be fulfilled for you.'

When Elizabeth had said all this with prophetic inspiration, Mary too, who thus far had concealed the joys of her heart out of maidenly modesty, was caught up by the Holy Spirit with which she had now been full for some time. She did not restrain herself but in a grateful hymn broke into praise

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proclaimed.' These, as likely to be printers' errors as Erasmus', were corrected in *1534*.

87 Elizabeth's question in verse 43 is understood as meaning not 'Why have you come?' but as humble acknowledgment of her not meriting a visit from her superior in rank by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 7 PL 26 248B and Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1641B, both quoted in the *Catena aurea* (on 1:43).

88 The paraphrase on verse 45, beginning at 'In this respect you are assuredly blessed, that you had no distrust' relies on a Vulgate reading *credidisti* 'you have believed,' thus taking the sentence as directed at Mary. In the *1522* annotation *et beata quae credidisti* (on 1:45) Erasmus admits that the Greek sentence lacks a verb with a person-ending, and so the feminine verbal adjective in fact allows either 'you' or 'she' to be the subject of 'believed.' There Erasmus says that the meaning is the same but prefers the third-person interpretation for its more prophetic tone. In his *1516* NT he took the sentence as third person, 'she who has believed.' Here he stays close to the Vulgate familiar to his readers. DV has second person; AV has third person. Cf Fitzmyer AB Luke 365 n45 and ASD VI-5 463 597–9nn. Modern texts take the sentence as third person.

of God, to whose goodness all glorious things that befall humankind must be ascribed.[89] 'You are right, Elizabeth,' she said, 'to congratulate me; but all this is God's gift and freely given, and I can claim for my own merits no part of it.[90]

'And so not just my tongue but also, from my innermost being, my soul, well aware of its feebleness, extols the Lord in praise,[91] the more ardently marvelling at the magnitude of his divine loving-kindness the less it sees any merits in itself. There is reason for me to thank him, reason for me to declare his benevolence; there is nothing for me to congratulate in myself.

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89 The prophetic nature of Elizabeth's speech just ended, and of Mary's song about to begin, as well as the fact that both women prophesy in words before their prophet sons do, is noted by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 8 PL 26 249C; the latter point appears also in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1643A and Hugh of St Cher (on 1:46) 135V. Origen also renews here the Eve / Mary contrast, a theme picked up by Ambrose (just cited) 1643A–B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 321D, and the *Gloss* (on 1:47), but ignored by Erasmus here; cf n81 above. Mary's humility is the object of widespread comment. Her abandonment of virginal modesty (or female weakness, according to Ambrose) in her undertaking to sing God's praises is noted by Ambrose (just cited) 1643B, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 1:46), and Hugh of St Cher (just cited). In the annotation *et ait Maria* (on 1:46) Erasmus comments admiringly that Origen had pointed out the prophetic nature of Mary's song in his *Hom* 8.

90 Erasmus passes from Elizabeth's words ending in verse 45 to Mary's song in a way quite similar to Nicholas of Lyra's paraphrasing comment on 1:46: 'O Elizabeth, you magnify me; but I attribute the whole business to God, and I magnify him in this song.'
Here Erasmus begins the paraphrase on the first of the three canticles, or songs of praise, that early entered the liturgy of the Daily Office from Luke 1–2. Mary's song (1:46–55) is also called the Magnificat, from its first word in Latin; the other two are the song of Zechariah, or Benedictus (1:68–79) and the song of Simeon, or Nunc dimittis, 2:29–32. In the Western church the Benedictus is a morning canticle, and the other two are evening canticles. See n126 and the ODCC at the Latin names of these songs. The changes to the Magnificat that Erasmus had made in his NT text were much disputed; cf his *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 37, 347–8 and the notes there.

91 'Extols the Lord in praise' is *dominum extollit laudibus*, paraphrasing the Vulgate *magnificat*. Erasmus' annotation *magnificat* (on 1:46) had said that a more fitting word would be *magnifacit* 'make much of, value highly' (a word used by Plautus in *Asinaria* 407 and *Pseudolus* 577–8); but he explains that *magnificat* here is meant to signify *extollit* 'extol' or *effert laudibus* 'exalt, lift up in praise.' In the paraphrase he chooses the first of these verbs. Similarly, in the next paragraph his 'rejoices' (*gestit*) and 'exults' (*exultat*) adds paraphrasing synonyms to the Vulgate *exultavit*, early translated into English as 'hath rejoiced' (DV and AV).

'And yet with an ineffable delight my spirit, inspired by the heavenly Spirit, rejoices and exults not in itself but in God, who for me and for all people is the source of all salvation.

'For though I was the most inglorious of all, even so, in accordance with his goodness, he regarded his lowly handmaiden[92] and honoured me with so great a gift that from now on, according to what your words and the angel's say, not only are the Jews of this generation going to call me most blessed but all the nations of the whole world in every age, because a saviour will come to them through me.[93] Surely we can be called truly blessed only in what has been conferred on us not by our own efforts, not by our merits, but by the freely given favour of divine might. Therefore all the praise for this blessed

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92 Mary's humility (the virtue, not the social status) is remarked on here by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 8 PL 26 251A, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1642C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 321D (who contrasts it with Eve's pride), and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 709C–D. Bede is followed by the *Gloss* (on 1:48), the *Catena aurea* (on 1:48) quoting Theophylact among others, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:48) in different terms. Erasmus paraphrases *humilitatem ancillae* 'lowliness of his handmaiden' by giving Mary the adjective *abiectissima* 'most abject, discarded, downcast, worthless, inglorious' to describe herself before using the phrase *humilem ancillam* 'lowly handmaiden' as an accommodation to the familiar Vulgate expression. This is part of his view that Mary's humility in Scripture refers to her sense of status more than to her moral character. In the annotation *humilitatem ancillae* (on 1:48) he had commented on the Greek ταπείνωσιν (*humilitatem* in the Vulgate) that the reader is to understand it as *parvitatem* 'littleness, insignificance,' not a virtue of the heart, which would be a different Greek word, ταπεινοφροσύνη 'humblemindedness.' In *1527* he enlarged this note considerably, in consequence of Noël Béda's criticisms of the paraphrases on 1:30 and 1:48, arguing that even if the Greek in the text is taken as the virtue properly called by the other Greek word and in Latin *modestia*, we must understand Mary here to be praising not her own virtue but the grace of God she has received. See also n67.

The same annotation asserted that *respexit* 'has regarded,' the verb of which the Vulgate *humilitatem* is the object, should have had not an object but a prepositional phrase *ad humilitatem*, so as to mean the opposite of 'turn away from,' ie 'has looked to the humbleness of his handmaiden' – but he does not make that change in the paraphrase. See the extensive notes on this passage in ASD VI-5 463–9.

93 Erasmus, like Hugh of St Cher (on 1:48) 136r, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 1:48), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:48), here explicates *omnes generationes* as referring to both Jews and all other future believers. 'Saviour' is *servator*, the classical Latin word for 'saviour' that Erasmus preferred to *salvator* of the Christian tradition. See chapter 2 n27.

state will redound to the praise of him who conferred it freely. I shall be declared blessed only by his bountifulness.

'But what will the nations of the whole world say about me in later ages? Of course, that in me, a very lowly girl, he who in his immense power can do anything effected a marvellous and unheard-of thing. And that is why my name will be numbered among the blessed. But his name shall be holy and revered everywhere, and at it every knee shall bow, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth,[94] for through it alone shall come salvation for the whole world. At the invocation of this name diseases shall be dispelled, poisons lose their force, demons flee, and the dead return to life.[95]

'And this shall be freely given, not a debt owed; it shall be a matter of mercy, not merit. He shall pour it forth as lavishly as possible, not only for the Jewish people, who were unique in looking for him to come, not only for one generation; it will be spread widely from nation to nation to the furthest reaches of the earth, from age to age to the last day of this world.[96] The Israelites alone, indeed, had looked for the salvation promised by the prophets, but anyone of any race whatsoever who leaves his sins behind and begins to fear God will be counted in the fellowship of Israel. This salvation will extend to those who, dissatisfied with themselves, submit by faith to the Lord, whether Greeks or Gauls or Britons or Scythians.[97] On the other hand,

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94 'Every knee ... under the earth.' Cf Isa 45:23 (Vulg 24), Rom 14:11, Phil 2:10. Erasmus' expression is almost identical to the Vulgate of Phil 2:10 *omne genu flectatur caelestium, terrestrium et infernorum*.

95 For the effects on earthly life of the invocation of Jesus' name, see eg 7:21–3, Matt 10:8 and 11:2–6, Mark 16:17–18. The sorts of miracles in this list occur frequently in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' own life and the experiences of his disciples sent on mission trips, as well as in passages of Acts where the apostles invoke his name, eg Acts 3:1–10, 5:14–16, and 9:36–43.

96 For similar expressions of the wideness in God's mercy, see eg Pss 89:2, 100:5, and 103:11, 13, 17. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 322B–C, quoting Acts 10:35, marks verse 50 as the point in the Magnificat where Mary turns from the grace bestowed on herself to God's general judgments for the human race, good and bad. Bede's division is noted by the *Gloss* (on 1:50), Hugh of St Cher (on 1:50) 136v (who takes 'from generation' to mean the Jews and 'to generations' to mean all the gentiles who become believers), the *Catena aurea* (on 1:50), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:50). Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 709D–712A has a similar remark about the meaning, though not the formal division. Nicholas also draws attention to John 4:22–4 for the claim that salvation originates with the Jews but applies to the whole world; see Erasmus' next sentence.

97 The NT regularly pairs Greeks with Jews to express the unrestricted availability of salvation; see eg Acts 14:1, 18:4, 19:10, Rom 1:14 (Greeks and barbarians); 1 Cor 1:22–4, Col 3:11 (Greeks, barbarians, Scythians). Erasmus is fond

those who trust in their own deeds and raise themselves up against the greatness of God will be driven back from association with this generous act, even if they are descendants of Abraham or David. For this divine gift will be bestowed not on the basis of the possession of riches or the rank of one's family or the works of the Law or other merits or resources of a human kind, but on the recommendation of a humble heart, one repentant concerning itself and dependent in simple faith on the mercy of God.

'For wishing to cast down the arrogance of worldly wisdom and might, God has bared the strength of his arm through his Son made lowly; and he has rendered the wisdom of this world foolishness.[98] He has cast down and shattered the might of this world, making it plain that even when he lowers himself as much as possible he is still mightier than the pinnacle of all human might; and what appears foolish in him is wiser than the wisdom of this world, however marvellous. But those who, relying on their own wisdom, trusting in their own strength, stiffen their necks against God, he has wondrously scattered[99] in their own purposes, as he had once promised through

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of expanding these names with others, perhaps those among whom his readers might find themselves included, as here: Gauls and Britons. See the paraphrases on Rom 1:14 CWE 42 17 with n13 and on Col 3:11 CWE 43 421 with n15, the similar lists he inserts in the *Paraphrase on Matthew* CWE 45 8 and 31, and the paraphrases on Luke 19:26 and 40 CWE 48 143 and 151.

98 'Bared the strength of his arm' is *exeruit robur sui brachii*. The Vulgate text says *fecit potentiam in brachio suo* 'made might with his arm.' In the annotation *fecit potentiam* (on 1:51) Erasmus said that the Greek word κράτος means either physical strength (*robur*) or political / military power (*imperium*). Here he chooses the first option and replaces the colorless *fecit* 'made' with *exeruit*, from *ex(s)erere* 'bare, thrust forth.'

The arm of the Lord in verse 51 is identified as the Son of God by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 477C–D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 322C–D, the marginal and interlinear *Glosses* (on 1:51), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 712C, Hugh of St Cher (on 1:51) 136V, the *Catena aurea* (on 1:51) quoting Bede and Theophylact, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:51). Nicholas cites the underlying passage of Scripture, Isa 53:1–2. For the humbling of God's Son in the NT, see Phil 2:6–8, Heb 5:8–9, and for the foolish wisdom of the world contrasted with the wise foolishness of God, 1 Cor 1:19–25, with the OT passages reflected there (eg Isa 24:14 and 44:25, Ps 33:10).

99 'Scattered' is *dissipavit* for the Vulgate *dispersit*; the words are synonymous in classical Latin. 'Purposes' (*consiliis*): in the annotation *cordis sui* (on 1:51) Erasmus had said that the Vulgate *mente* 'mind' (DV 'conceit,' AV 'imagination') was not strictly speaking a satisfactory translation of διανοία 'mind' or 'a thought, an intention or purpose' and suggested *cogitatione* 'thinking' or *consiliis* 'plans, planning, purposes' instead. Here he chooses the latter option.

the prophet: 'I shall seize the wise in their wisdom.'[100] For while they fought with human cleverness against the divine purpose, they have both exposed their own foolishness and unwittingly shed light on divine wisdom. And while with the resources of this world they have tried to crush God's purpose, they have made it clear how the world can do nothing against divine power, which they have strengthened by their rebellion.

'And so, the world turned upside down, those who once sat high upon their thrones, swollen with human wisdom, fearsome in their human power and authority, he has dragged down from the pinnacle of worldly affairs, and those who in the world's eyes were humble his divine loving-kindness has raised on high.[101] Those who seemed to hold the citadel of religion have been apprehended in their godlessness; those who seemed to be estranged from God have suddenly been made children of God. Those who acknowledged their own unrighteousness and hungered for his righteousness God has filled with his good things; on the other hand, those who thought themselves supremely rich and overflowing in good works, and therefore did not hunger for the grace of the gospel, he has cast starving out of his presence.[102]

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100 An approximate quotation of part of Isa 29:14b, cited by Paul in 1 Cor 1:19; see n98. But Erasmus has replaced the Vulgate's verb here, *perdam* 'destroy,' with *comprehendam* 'seize, lay hold of,' perhaps blurring his recollection of this quotation with a similar one Paul uses a bit later, 1 Cor 3:19 'Who catches [*apprehendit*] the wise in their craftiness,' alluding to Job 5:13.

101 'Dragged down from the pinnacle of worldly affairs' is *detraxit a rerum fastigio*, a vivid paraphrase on *deposuit . . . a sede* 'put down . . . from their seats.' In his annotation *deposuit potentes* (on 1:52) Erasmus had suggested that the verb καθεῖλεν is better expressed by *detraxit*, both words meaning 'drag down.' He also suggested *primores* 'leaders' or *magistratus* 'rulers' for *potentes* 'the mighty,' since the Greek word being translated is δυνάστας 'city leaders' or 'commanders.' This approach is reflected in the first part of Erasmus' sentence. Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 480A says that 'the proud' of the previous verse and 'the mighty' here can be taken as demons or as Greek philosophers and Jewish scribes and Pharisees. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 712C–713A echoes Cyril and adds that the gentile humble are adopted as sons; Hugh of St Cher (on 1:52) 136v also says the humble are gentiles. Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:52) says the powerful are the Jews, because of the Law and the prophets. Without labelling the groups he describes, Erasmus still combines all these ideas by his references to wisdom, power, and religion, and also, here and in what follows, alludes to parts of the Beatitudes; cf 6:21, Matt 5:3, and the next note.

102 Cyril and Theophylact in the passages cited in the preceding note say that it is the Jews who are sent away hungry for the word of God. 'Hungered for his righteousness' echoes Matt 5:6. 'Cast from his presence' (*reiecit a se*) is a reflection of the view Erasmus expressed in the annotation *dimisit* (on 1:53) that the

'Circumcision has been turned into uncircumcision, and the uncircumcised have succeeded to the glory of the circumcised. The self-satisfied Israelite has been excluded from the kingdom of God, and gentiles have been received into the position of children of Abraham. The haughty Pharisee has been disdained, and prostitutes and the humble tax collector made welcome. He has thrown down the upright and lofty; he has stretched out his hand of mercy and raised the fallen and endangered. He has blinded those who could see and opened the eyes of those who bewailed their blindness. He has brought healing to those who acknowledged their sickness, and he has left in their sickness those who thought themselves sound. Those who boasted that they were sons of Abraham he declared were sons of the devil. Those who had no blood relationship to Abraham he made Abraham's true sons by faith in the gospel. Those who vaunted themselves in the glorious name of Israel he has disinherited from sharing in the promises to Israel.[103]

'But God has welcomed to himself anyone, slave or free, from any nation who presented himself for God's spiritual worship, and in that person he has fulfilled his long-delayed mercy promised by the sayings of the prophets to the people of Israel, whom, as being uniquely loved, he calls in Scripture his child.[104] He had not forgotten his promise, but because of the

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Greek verb did not mean 'send away' in a permissive sense, 'let go,' but indicated active frustration or thwarting of the claimants so sent.

While the sequence of paired opposites continues, since Erasmus' topic changes specifically to the Jews, this sentence apparently ends the paraphrase on our verse 53, and the following pairs that refer specifically to the Jews begin the paraphrase on verse 54, in a familiar rhetorical tactic that starts by elimination of the opposites to a speaker's assertion. See n104.

103 Reversal in the positions of the circumcised and the uncircumcised: Rom 2:25–9. The reception of gentiles as children of Abraham: 8:8, Rom 9:8, Gal 3:7–9. Welcoming prostitutes and tax collectors: eg 5:7 and 19:2–10, Matt 9:2–13 and 21:31–2. Blinding those who can see: eg 8:9–10, Isa 6:9–10, Matt 13:14–15, John 12:40. Opening the eyes of the blind: eg 7:21–2 and 18:35–43, Isa 29:18. Healing those who acknowledge their sickness but not those who do not: 5:12–13, 8:41–56, 18:18–23; Ps 6:2–4. Sons of the devil and sons of Abraham: John 8:31–47.

104 'Slave or free, from any nation' is another allusion to Gal 3:28 and Col 3:11; see n97. Israel is called the child of God in Hos 11:1, as Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 322D–323A points out. The *Gloss* (on 1:54) and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:48) say that the third section of the Magnificat begins at *suscepit Israel*, our verse 54; the *Gloss* notes that *suscepit* means 'take up' as a doctor takes up a sick person. Bede and the *Gloss* are quoted in the *Catena aurea* (on 1:54). Erasmus' annotation *suscepit Israel* (on 1:54) says that the Greek verb being translated is properly used of someone stretching out a helping hand. In his paraphrase this becomes *ad se recepit* 'has welcomed [or 'taken'] to himself.'

long delay, despair, as though he had forgotten, had crept in. Now he has made plain that he is in no way unmindful of his people. For this is the true posterity of Abraham; this is the true Israel, which is commended to God not by blood relationship but by the sincerity of faith whereby alone God is perceived.[105] These things are not happening by chance or accident; what God once promised to our forefathers, to Abraham and his descendants, has now been shown forth. For it was said to Abraham, "All nations shall be blessed in your seed." It was said to David, "From the fruit of your loins I shall set [one] on your throne."[106] These things once promised, looked for by the pious, despaired of by many, God has now seen fit to fulfil for Abraham's true descendants, whose race shall not fail as long as the world remains.'

Mary proclaimed all this in a spirit of prophecy, as if what was going to happen in the future were already accomplished.[107]

Furthermore, Mary stayed with her cousin Elizabeth for about three months, assisting the older woman with holy conversations and affectionate services. But when the time of her cousin's delivery was near, Mary returned to her own home. For the duty of attending at a birth is not suitable for virgins, and she was escaping the crowd that would soon come pouring in.[108]

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105 'Faith whereby alone God is perceived' is an allusion to the definition of Israel recorded by Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 139, 152, 155: 'a man who sees God'; the same definition is in Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 713A. Erasmus uses the same definition in the long exposition of 24:27 CWE 48 241. The spiritual, not physical, relationship of the true believer in Jesus to Israel and the God of Abraham is asserted here by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 480C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 323A–B, the *Gloss* (on 1:55), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:55). For despair arising from God's delay see eg Isaiah 64.

106 The promise to Abraham: Gen 17:5–7; cf Gal 3:16 and 29 (the latter cited here by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 323A–B); the prophecy to David: 2 Sam 7:12–14, Pss 2:7 and 132:11. Christ and the believers fulfil this prophecy: Heb 1:5.

107 At the end of the paraphrased Magnificat Erasmus adds Mary to the prophetic actors (the unborn John and his mother Elizabeth) he had already identified; cf the paraphrases on verses 41, 42, and 46. He concludes with an observation about the characteristic mode of prophetic speech, which represents future events as if they had already happened; his paraphrase has likewise maintained perfect-tense verbs to describe future action. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 325B makes the same observation, but at the beginning of Zechariah's hymn at 1:68.

108 The exegetical tradition is divided as to whether Mary stayed until Elizabeth's son was born or left shortly beforehand. All agree that Mary was helping Elizabeth in the final months of the older woman's pregnancy. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1643B–C (rather ambivalently) and Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 323B–C (explicitly), followed by the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 1:56)

And now the normal time for Elizabeth to deliver her baby arrived, and the birth of a son validated her faith in the divine promise. The news was spread by word of mouth among neighbours and relatives. As Elizabeth's barrenness had earlier grieved them, so they were now delighted that, in God's great mercy, the name of 'mother' had come to an old woman of lamented barrenness by the delivery of a male child. It would have been a blessed event for her to have borne a girl, but it was a much more blessed one that she bore a son. And here the promise of the angel, who had foretold that many would rejoice in the birth of a boy, was evident. For many rushed up and were congratulating the new mother. Indeed, it was only reasonable that many should rejoice at the birth of him who had been born to benefit many more.

Now the eighth day from the birth had come, on which, according to the requirement of the Law, the child was to be circumcised and given a name. So the relatives had come to discharge the responsibility of their kinship and see to it that the child was duly circumcised. Since the father, who normally is the one to bestow the name, was unable to speak, the relatives called him his father's name, Zechariah, supposing that the father wished it

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and Hugh of St Cher (on 1:56) 137r, say that Mary was with Elizabeth until John was born; Ambrose, Bede, and Hugh agree that from Mary's God-filled presence the unborn John received as it were an athlete's training for his future role as the forerunner of Jesus. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 713C says Mary stayed with Elizabeth out of wonder at the strange events and being in need of the encouragement she would get from her cousin; but when Elizabeth's delivery was near, she left, partly because of the crowd that would soon gather there and partly because a virgin could not respectably be involved in a birthing. The *Catena aurea* (on 1:56) quotes Ambrose and Bede (though not Bede's explicit statement that Mary was present at John's birth), Theophylact, and 'a Greek,' who like Theophylact says that virgins customarily leave when a child is being born. Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:56) thinks Mary stayed for John's birth and adds that some say Mary herself 'received and held' the newborn; but he admits that some doctors like 'Theophilus' (*sic* in the 1498 edition used here) and 'a Greek' say she left when the birth was imminent, both because virgins do not attend at childbirth and because other women had arrived to help Elizabeth.

Erasmus' decision to follow the Greeks here evoked another criticism from Noël Béda. Erasmus replied in the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 491D–E. He says that he was giving the more probable account: Mary stayed for about three months, and the evangelist follows the report of her departure with that of John's birth. To reinforce the likelihood of this version Erasmus adds the two reasons implied or given by his Greek sources: the customary services of female relatives attending Elizabeth and the fact that a virgin is not much help at a delivery.

so. But instructed by inspiration of the Spirit,[109] the mother argued what she could not have learned from her speechless husband, that he was not to be called Zechariah but John. The Holy Spirit thus showed that the infant would be the herald of a new Law that would abolish the traditions of the ancients and turn carnal observances into spiritual grace, for in Hebrew Zechariah means 'mindful of the Lord'; John comes from 'grace.'[110] The righteousness of the Law consisted in prescribed works; gospel righteousness consists in grace by faith.

The relatives did not give way to the mother's authority but on the contrary argued that he should rather be named Zechariah because there was no one in all of Zechariah's family who was called John. And it is customary for the memory of a father or grandfather or uncle or some other relative to be renewed in a descendant. And to this day there are those to whom the name Zechariah is more appealing than John – precisely those who do not yet allow the abolition of the old ceremonies (circumcision, new moon observances, ritual bathing, fasts and festivals, dietary restrictions, sacrifices) – calling out, that is, in their actions, 'We don't want the name John, we want the old name Zechariah.'[111]

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109 'Instructed by inspiration of the Spirit.' The exegetical tradition agrees that the capacity for prophecy that had been demonstrated by Elizabeth already in verse 41 also enables her to know what her husband could not have told her, the angel's message to him in verse 13. The same tradition must lie behind Erasmus' comment at the beginning of the previous paragraph, that 'the birth of a son validated her faith in the divine promise' – a promise not made in her hearing. See Origen *Hom in Lucam* 9 PL 26 253A, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1644B–D, followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 323D–324A, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 1:60), Hugh of St Cher (on 1:60) 137V, the *Catena aurea* (on 1:60), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:60).

110 The end of the old carnal Law and the beginning of spiritual grace is noted as the meaning of the replacement of the name Zechariah by the name John in Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 324C, followed by the *Gloss* (on 1:60). Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 gives these definitions of the names Zechariah (122 and 138) and John (146 and 155). Cf n38, second paragraph. Bede gives Jerome's definition of John and the *Gloss* gives Jerome's definition of Zechariah. The *Catena aurea* (on 1:64) quotes Bede but also (on 1:62–3) attributes to Origen a definition of Zechariah as 'mindful of God' and an alternative definition of John as 'the demonstrator,' 'one who points to the presence of God,' though it also cites Chrysostom's definition of John as 'the grace of God.'

111 This sentence was taken by Noël Béda as a criticism of contemporary practitioners of festivals, fasts, and dietary restrictions in the Catholic church. In the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 491E Erasmus replied that Béda is forgetting that Luke is the speaker, in an era when the Jews were actively maintaining the

So since there was no meeting of minds between the new mother and the relatives, the father's authority was needed to end the dispute. He still had no power of speech, though there was now need of speaking out. So signs were made to him somehow with nods: what name did he wish given to his son? When he understood the issue, he made a request for writing tablets so that he could show in voiceless letters what he could not express aloud. When tablets had been brought, he wrote on them as follows: 'His name is John,' indicating the name given him by the angel before his conception. Everyone was amazed both that he decided for the unusual name and that between mother and voiceless father there was agreement about the name. The time was approaching when the law of Moses would begin to speak, though till now it had only signalled gospel grace in figures and voiceless letters. The time was near when belief would open the mouth that, as Gabriel had promised, disbelief had closed.[112]

For as soon as he finished writing, his tongue was unbound. And he began his restored ability to speak with nothing other than praise of God, by whose freely given generosity so great a heap of joys had come to him. Not unless the Jewish tongue, preacher of carnal ceremonies and claimant of human righteousness, falls silent can the gospel tongue speak, the tongue that proclaims grace and faith and love, not the works of the Law; that does not claim for a person the praise of righteousness from his own deeds but preaches God's righteousness from an innocence freely conferred through faith.[113] All this, about the old woman now a new mother, about the strangeness of the name, about the son born in accordance with an angel's promise, about the father first turned from being capable of human speech into a mute and then turned from being speechless into a person eloquent in praise of God, was spread far and wide by word of mouth, not now among the relatives and neighbours only but also throughout the whole area of Judea that is called the hill country. It spread in such a way that not only amazement

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practices required by their Law, as the other items in the list should have made clear. Even so, he says, there are some Christians too who Judaize in making more of ritual practices than they should. He makes essentially the same arguments in sharper language in the *Supputatio* LB IX 601C–603A.

112 Cf 1:20; see the paraphrase on this verse 35.

113 Zechariah's loss of his ability to speak and its restoration when he confirms that the child's name is John is allegorized as the end of the Old Law and the beginning of the new dispensation of grace, enacted in the person of this righteous Jewish priest, by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 324C–D, followed by the *Gloss* (on 1:60) and the *Catena aurea* (on 1:60). The allegory will also affect Erasmus' paraphrase on the Benedictus; see his treatment of verse 75, 64.

but even a kind of stupefaction and dread, formed from so many and such unusual wonders, took hold of everyone's heart. So, from these preliminaries they gathered that someday the newborn boy would accomplish great and unheard-of things, since his conception and birth were already marked by marvels. They saw the father's enfeebled old age,[114] the aged woman's lamented barrenness; they reflected on the miracle of speech suddenly taken away and suddenly restored. They had heard that the services of Gabriel had been involved, they perceived the inspiration of the heavenly Spirit in both parents, that everything was beyond the common custom, that everything displayed divine power. Each one considering these things in his own heart, they said to each other, 'Just who is this boy going to be?[115] No one of the prophets was born so miraculously. Surely the very marvels in the business make it plain that all this is being done by God's power, the kind that is present in a child chosen for high things.' And these were no rash speculations. For truly the hand of God asserted its heavenly power in the boy, and through the boy in his parents; and in good time it would bring forth more marvellous things.

And so that everything would be abounding in miracles and overflowing with joy, Zechariah too, the father of John, completely inspired by the divine Spirit, burst into this hymn:

'The goodness of God must be declared and lifted up with every sort of praise, for though he is God of all, he has wished to be called especially the God of Israel, not because he is not the Lord of other nations but because he has wished the people of Israel to be a type of that heavenly people who, having scorned earthly things, long for the eternal Jerusalem where God is worshipped in things invisible.[116] By such people, wherever on earth they

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114 'Enfeebled old age' is *effoetam senectutem*, a Virgilian phrase describing an aged priestess of Juno, *Aeneid* 7.440.

115 'Just who' (*quis nam*). Picking up on a point in Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 1:66), Erasmus here uses a standard Latin expression that indicates emphatic or amazed inquiry. His own annotation *quis putas* (on 1:66) had said this was a better translation of the Greek τίς ἄρα than the Vulgate's version (which translates as 'who, do you suppose, . . .?'). Valla and Erasmus both actually preferred *quid nam* 'just what' because it preserves the neuter gender of the Greek word for 'child, boy' later in the question, and Erasmus used that expression in his NT.

116 That God is God not just of Israel but of all peoples or of the whole world is a common theme in Psalms (eg 22:27–8, 67:2–5, 82:8, 117:1) and the prophets (eg Isa 2:1–4 and chapters 60–6, Jer 3:17 and 4:2, Zec 2:11). That an eternal and spiritual Jerusalem is the reality behind the 'type' of Israel and the earthly Jerusalem is an interpretation in the NT; see John 4:22–4 and its paraphrase at CWE 46 58, with Rev 3:12, 21:1–2 and 22–6.

dwell, of whatever nation they are born, God is to be praised, for at last he has deigned to visit his people in a new way, a people now labouring under the weariness of a long unhappy servitude and very close to despair. Against them Satan, sin, and the world have grown so strong that there is no hope in the Pharisees, in philosophers, or in the ceremonies of the law of Moses. He has regarded[117] his people with kindness and has freely redeemed them from all these ills.

'It was a mighty tyrant who, attended by a numerous escort, reigned throughout every race of humankind. The freedom of the Israelites could not be won from him by human powers.[118] God alone, being stronger than his enemy, has strengthened the weak by sending an invincible leader to cast down the forces of his adversaries with the horn of divine might and, once death has been conquered, to bestow eternal salvation by faith freely on all.[119] This salutary defence he raised up for us in the line of David his worshipper, to whom he had promised this favour, that it would come from David for all those who were shown to be David's sons in spirit,[120] not departing from their forefather's godliness. David fought bravely and successfully against foreigners and enemies of the people of Israel. Under this leader the fight must be against more dangerous enemies, who destroy souls: these are

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117 'He has regarded' is *respexit*, echoing 1:48, for the Vulgate text's *visitavit* (DV and AV 'visited'); cf the second paragraph of n92.

118 In this and the last several sentences (and continuing below) Erasmus introduces Satan as a personification of the 'enemies' of Israel mentioned by Zechariah in the Gospel text. Thus he develops the theme of the threats to Israel as spiritual, not physical, while continuing the metaphor of warfare implied by the Gospel's words and made explicit in the paraphrase. Origen *Hom in Lucam* 10 PL 26 254B also understands the enemies as spiritual, not physical. Hugh of St Cher (on 1:71) 138v, followed by Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:74), refers to 'enemies' as the world, the flesh, and the devil; cf Erasmus' 'Satan, sin, and the world' at the end of the previous paragraph.

119 The Gospel's 'horn of salvation' is identified as a mark not just of power but also of kingship, and ultimately as Jesus Christ by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 481A, followed by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 716D. Here Erasmus too personifies the mode of salvation as a mighty leader, though without calling him the Son of God until the paraphrase on verse 76. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 325B–C points out that a horn of consecrated oil was the means of bestowing kingship on David and Solomon. The *Gloss* (on 1:69) echoes Bede's other comment at the same place, that the 'horn,' being neither flesh nor bone, symbolizes rising above the physical world, ie Jesus Christ.

120 'David's sons in spirit' is also a theme of Mary's song; see 56–7 and the notes there.

Satan with his troops of godless spirits; these are depraved desires that provoke to things hateful to God; these are human beings that love the things of this world more than they love what belongs to God; and through them as through tools the devil discloses his power.

'And such things are not happening this way by chance; rather, what God is now performing he had long since promised through the mouths of all the prophets into whom he breathed his Spirit and who have prophesied from the creation of the world.

'For he had promised that someday when a mighty leader was sent, we would be saved from our enemies[121] and rescued from the hands of all who wished us ill and tried to drag us into eternal death.

'Nor was it owing to our merit that he promised us this great good, nor to the merit of our forefathers, to whom he had promised what he has shown to us. In his goodness he thought it right to bestow so great a thing without our deserving it; in his righteousness he thought it best to fulfil what he had promised in his own good time, so that everyone might understand that he is not only merciful and a doer of good but also truthful and one who keeps his word.

'For he not only promised, he made a covenant with our forefathers; he swore by himself to our patriarch Abraham, being pleased, plainly, with Abraham's amazing trust in him (because, relying on the divine promise he did not hesitate to sacrifice his only son, Isaac). He said, "I have sworn by myself since you have done that thing and for my sake did not spare your only begotten son. I shall bless you and multiply your posterity like the stars of the sky and the sand on the shore of the sea. Your seed will possess the gates of their enemies, and through your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed because you obeyed my word."[122] Surely the true posterity of

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121 'That . . . we would be saved from our enemies' is *ut . . . servaremur ab hostibus nostris*. In a *1522* addition to the annotation *salutem ex inimicis* (on 1:71; DV 'salvation from our enemies') Erasmus argued that the various verbal forms in (what we call) verses 72–4 in the Vulgate and his own NT text depended on 'he said' in verse 70, so that it made for a smoother structure to have a parallel here to the other reports of what 'he spoke' rather than the simple noun *salutem* 'salvation.' The AV has 'that we should be saved' in verse 71. In the paraphrase here he also changes 'enemies' from the Vulgate *inimici*, meaning personal opponents or enemies, to the more military *hostes*, armed forces of an opposing ruler.

122 The words of God here are from Gen 22:16–17, with some differences in vocabulary from the Vulgate. The changes amount to no difference in meaning but do draw on somewhat more sophisticated levels of classical Latin usage than are typical of the Vulgate.

Abraham are those who, not through the ceremonies of the Law but through the obedience of faith, obey God speaking through the gospel to the world.

'To these the promised victory over enemies is made good because, freed from the tyranny of sin, freed from all going astray, freed from the yoke of Satan, they have been granted renunciation of their former life, so that hereafter, secure in the protection of our leader, we may serve him alone to whom we owe all things, though earlier we had served ambition, lust, greed – had served the devil.[123]

'But let us not serve sabbath rules, new moon ceremonies, dietary rules, sacrifices of cattle, things that among humankind have the appearance of religion, as our ancestors have done up till now. Rather, let us serve purity of conscience, let us serve uprightness of life, which is worship most pleasing to God, for he has no regard for sacrifices of flesh but for godliness of heart, desiring to have sacrifices of his own gifts made to him.[124] And such worship is to be offered to God not on set days, as has been done until now, but throughout our whole life. For there is to be no cessation of such sacrifices; but the godliness freely granted once and for all is to be continually advanced by sacred studies. And so we are blessed in the divine gift, for to us, according to the words of the prophets, a mighty redeemer and invincible saviour has been given.

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123 The paraphrase here elides a difficulty for some in the interpretation of the Vulgate's wording of the series that began in verse 71 (see n121). The Vulgate text has *iusiurandum quod iuravit . . . daturum se nobis, ut sine timore, de manu inimicorum liberati, serviamus illi* 'the oath that he swore he would grant [or 'give'] us, having been saved from the hand of our enemies, to serve him without fear.' But to some Latin theologians of Erasmus' day it seems to have meant '. . . he swore he would give himself.' Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 1:74) had suggested that the Latin would have been closer to the Greek if *se* 'he' (subject) or 'himself' (object) had been placed before *daturum* ('would grant / give') instead of after it. Erasmus said in a *1516* annotation *daturum se* (on 1:74) that 'the Greek means something slightly other than what we understand' and translated 'he would grant us . . . to serve him without fear.' His NT read *ut daret nobis* 'he would grant us,' as in the annotation. In the paraphrase he steers clear of the controversy and speaks only of 'the promised victory.'

124 The OT has several instances of prophetic declarations that God is not moved by ceremonial sacrifices and observances but by the disposition of the hearts of his people; eg Pss 50:12–15 and 51:16–17, Isa 1:11–17, Hos 6:6, Mic 6:6–8. See also Matt 9:13 and 12:7, Mark 12:33. The *Catena aurea* (on 1:75) quotes Chrysostom as distinguishing between the carnal service of Jewish ritual and the spiritual service of good works, that is, 'holiness and righteousness.' Cf also the paraphrase on Rom 12:1–2 CWE 42 69–70.

'And by gift of the same God, you too, child, are blessed, for you have been chosen the forerunner of so great a leader. For as the morning star[125] precedes the rising of the sun, rousing sleepy mortals to look for the coming light, so you will be the forerunner when the coming of the Lord is near, who has determined to visit our world in the person of his only Son, and you will prepare the hearts of humankind to receive so great a salvation, lest, if that coming finds human minds drowsy and turned away, the salvation offered be converted into the culmination of their destruction.

'For by your baptism and your preaching you will make them understand that they are sinners, make them know that they have need of a physician, and make them recognize that he is already at hand, the one who alone of all will bestow eternal salvation[126] on all through gospel faith, specifically through the free forgiveness of our sins, which bring death to the soul, and through his righteousness freely conferred on us.

'And that will happen for all who believe in him, by no merit whatsoever of mortals but because of the abounding mercy of our God, who did not want those he had created to perish. We were created by the Almighty,

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125 'Morning star' is *hesperus*. In Greek ἕσπερος and in the Latin transliteration *hesperus* it usually names the evening star. But the ancients knew perhaps as early as Pythagoras' day that the evening and morning stars were in fact the same heavenly body, the 'wandering star' or planet we call Venus, which is visible just before the rising sun or in the early evening. See Cicero *De natura deorum* 2.53, with the notes in A.S. Pease's edition (Cambridge, MA 1955), Pliny *Naturalis historia* 2.6.36–8, Hyginus *De astronomia* 2.42. A classical Greek name for the morning star is ἑωσφόρος, in Latin letters *heosphoros* 'light bearer, dawn bearer.' In the Septuagint it is found in Isa 14:12, translated in the Vulgate as *Lucifer* 'light bearer,' and as an alternative reading at 2 Pet 1:19; see the notes in Nestle-Aland on this verse. Cyril *Comm in Joannem* 2 PG 73 265A–B uses the term of the Baptist in a comment on John 3:30. Because of the identity of morning and evening stars, or perhaps because Latin *hesperus* could conceivably be a version of ἑωσφόρος, Erasmus may have chosen to use the term here where he clearly means to signify the morning star. He had also used *Lucifer* of the Baptist in the paraphrase on John 1:7 CWE 46 19 and in a metaphor of the Baptist in the paraphrase on 1:14, 32 and n39.
Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 720B alludes to Christ as the 'sun of righteousness' (Mal 4:2), implied in the next part of this sentence. Hugh of St Cher (on 1:76) 139r draws a comparison in time between dawn (Aurora) and the sun, like Erasmus anticipating the imagery of darkness and daylight in the closing lines of the canticle.

126 'Physician . . . salvation.' Hugh of St Cher (on 1:77) 137v remarks here that the evangelist means 'salvation [*salutem*, also meaning 'healing'] not of the body, which Hippocrates teaches, but of the soul, which Christ teaches.'

redeemed by the All-merciful. We were on the verge of perishing, had he not in his innate goodness taken pity on us, had he not risen like a kind of sun from heaven for us and dispelled the shadows of our ignorance, put to flight the gloom of our sins, and kindled our frozen hearts with the fire of his love.

'We lay in darkness, we were unable to lift our eyes towards him. He descended to us and, beaming his rays into our souls, shone bright and health-giving upon us, who earlier were sitting in the darkness of sin, in despair of salvation, as if in the shadow of death. Blinded by idolatries, beclouded by worldly lusts, we ran from impiety to impiety, groping in thickest gloom, embracing things earthly instead of heavenly, shadows instead of realities, things carnal instead of spiritual, deadly instead of wholesome. And look, in the deepest night of despair that eternal sun has risen for us, to guide the feet of our souls into the gospel path, which is the path of peace that reconciles the human with the divine through faith and love, removing the enmity that existed between God and mortals, cementing all the nations of the world into the proclamation of one name, one faith, and uniting to himself each and every human being, turbulent emotions lulled at last.'[127]

The godly old man, pouring out these things from his farseeing breast on the model of the prophets, foretold the future as if it had already been accomplished.[128]

To these wondrous beginnings the progress of events truly corresponded. For as the boy so amazingly born matured in body through the passage of time, so through the inspiration of divine power he continually advanced in steadiness and strength of spirit. And he did not keep to his parents' house for long but from early boyhood withdrew from much association with people, lest, sanctified in his mother's womb, he might contract even the least bit of stain from dealings with ordinary folk. He had never drunk wine or strong

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127 At the conclusion of his commentary on Zechariah's song, Hugh of St Cher (on 1:79) 137v notes that this canticle about the rising of Lucifer, the morning star, that is, the Baptist who precedes the sun of righteousness, is sung in the Morning Office of lauds; the Virgin's hymn (the Magnificat) is sung in the Sixth Office, vespers, because of the blessings brought in the sixth age (of traditional salvation history), and the song of Simeon departing to his rest (the Nunc dimittis) is sung in compline, because of the seventh age of final rest. See n90 above and chapter 2 n51.

128 The 'prophetic' practice of speaking of the future in the past tense, as if it were already so, was mentioned earlier by Erasmus, at the conclusion of Mary's song, 57. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 325B had made the same observation at the beginning of Zechariah's song; Hugh of St Cher (on 1:68) 138v and Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:68) do likewise in their general comment on *visitavit* 'he has visited.'

drink, he had never tasted anything of human pleasure or glory. Abandoning all human ties of affection, he lived among desert animals, feeding on locusts and wild honey; he clothed himself in camel skins, not silks, and belted himself with a rawhide girdle.[129] He had continual conversation with God. Such a life, surely, suited him, since he was destined to preach repentance. Even the place chosen matched the prophecy, which calls him 'the voice of one crying out in the desert.'[130] Here he concealed himself for many years, here he waited in silence, so that in his own good time he would come forth and speak out with greater authority. He did not rush to the herald's task; only when the Spirit compelled him to let his light shine forth and show the people of Israel how great he was did he begin, with great authority, to play his part as forerunner.[131]

Chapter 2

There you have the marvellous origin of the forerunner; now hear the still more marvellous origin of Jesus Christ, who was going to be the sole Prince of the entire world and invite, not by threats or terrors but by good deeds and wholesome teaching, all the nations of the whole world to the acknowledgment of his name. So it was arranged in the divine plan that under Augustus Caesar, who controlled a considerable part of the world and, having secured matters far and wide, was governing the Roman empire, all the provinces that acknowledged Roman power should be assessed.[1] In this way it would

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129 That the Baptist left his parents' home while still a boy in order to avoid polluting contact with other people is deduced from verse 80 by Origen *Hom in Luc* 11 PL 26 257C. The same early departure from home is noted by the *Gloss* (on 1:80), and avoidance of contamination as the reason is pointed out by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 720D–721A. Origen and Theophylact are quoted by the *Catena aurea* (on 1:80) but without mention of John's leaving home. For abstention from wine and strong drink, see 1:15; for rough clothing and diet, Matt 3:4 and Mark 1:6.

130 'The voice of one crying out in the desert' echoes 3:4, Matt 3:3, and Mark 1:3, all borrowing from Isa 40:3.

131 Reference to the Baptist's role here picks up on the prophecy of Zechariah in 1:76 and the angel's promises at 1:15–17.

1 In an annotation *ut profiterentur* (on 2:3) Erasmus had explained that the Greek text in verses 1–3 uses only forms of the verb ἀπογράφεσθαι 'write down, register' and the noun ἀπογραφή 'registration, record' for the tax registration, whereas the Vulgate uses the verbs *describere* 'write down' and *profiteri* 'make a declaration.' He preferred *censere* 'conduct a census, tax' to *describere* and pointed out that the same sort of record keeping is called *nomen dare* 'give one's name, sign

become evident how much further the reign of Christ extended than the reign of Caesar, and how the kingdom of him who takes nothing away but instead bestows heavenly gifts was much more peaceful than the kingdom of Caesar. For though Caesar is not able to make heavenly gifts, he still seizes earthly things and forcibly compels us to make our declaration, while the heavenly commander entices it by his good deeds. What else do those who sign up with Caesar declare but their slavery, and then they find their own property diminished? Those who sign up with this new kind of prince receive their liberty and a bonus of eternal salvation besides. In fact, although Octavius Caesar was supremely skilful at conducting state affairs, there were still many territories he was unable to subdue by force of arms; whereas without the use of force, without the resources of this world our general has gathered the whole globe into one church as into one kingdom: so many languages, so many rituals, so many religions, so many foreign and far distant nations. [2]

So on the authority of Caesar Augustus and by decree of the senate, Quirinus, governor of the province, was sent to Syria to carry out the registration in Syria. And this was the first census carried out in Syria by this governor. For under the same man others were held too, later on.[3] So in

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up' when it is for military purposes and *censura* 'census' when it is for financial purposes; the citizens' response to a *censura* is *professio* 'making a declaration' (ie of assets). In the paraphrase he uses his preferred terms and changes his language from that of civilian tax assessment to military enlistment in the course of this paragraph.

2 The themes of the divine plan behind the timing of Jesus' birth and of contrast between the census by the Roman emperor and enrolment in the new universal church are expressed in more elaborate terms in treatment of this passage by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1646B–1648A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 327C–328C, the *Gloss* (on 2:1), Hugh of St Cher (on 2:1) 140r, and the *Catena aurea* (on 2:1–3). Comparison of earthly military service and the life of the Christian soldier at war with satanic power is also the theme of Erasmus' *Enchiridion*; cf eg the opening sections CWE 66 24–30.

3 The spelling of the Roman governor's name and the meaning of the 'first' census have been disputed points in 2:2. Erasmus' preference for the specification that this census was the 'first' held by that governor in Syria follows the account in Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* 18.1.1 and summarized by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 328C–D. Bede is excerpted in the *Gloss* (on 2:2), Hugh of St Cher (on 2:2) 140r, and the *Catena aurea* (on 2:2), the latter two with more detail about the meaning(s) of 'first.' Valla *Annot in Lucam* commented that the spelling should be not Cyrinus (as in the tradition of Bede and the Vulgate) but Cyrenius. Erasmus follows Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 139, who read Cyrinus but said that a better and more correct spelling would be Quirinus. Modern texts tend to have Quirinius; cf Fitzmyer AB Luke 401–5.

obedience to Caesar's edict, which Quirinus had had published, everyone set out, each to his own tribe and city, to make his declaration in the customary way.

Now Joseph, the Virgin's betrothed, lived in Nazareth, which is in Galilee, though he was of the tribe of Judah, as was his wife also.[4] So he left his home and set out for his tribe, that is, Judah, for a small city that King David built up, Bethlehem by name, because Joseph and the Virgin not only belonged to the tribe of Judah but also traced their descent from the line and stock of David, and Christ had been promised from David's seed.[5] None of this happened by chance; everything was arranged by divine purpose so that the outcome of events would match the things foretold by the prophets, because they divided the glory of so great an event between two cities, saying that the king of the world would be conceived and brought up in Nazareth but would be born in Bethlehem, according to prophecy.[6]

The Virgin Mary, pregnant and now close to her time, accompanied her husband. The Virgin big with child did not refuse this effort; conscious of her innocence, she did not shun people's gaze; soon to give birth to God, she did not shrink from obedience to her husband; completely dedicated to God, she did not disdain to be thought a carpenter's wife. So on this occasion, when they had spent some time in the city of Nazareth, it happened that, the normal months having gone by (so that there would be more complete agreement that the one to be born was a true human being), the time for her delivery was imminent. The Lord of heaven and earth had chosen for himself a

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4 See chapter 1 n57. Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 484A–B and 'a Greek' quoted in the *Catena aurea* (on 2:4–5) comment here on Mary's membership in the tribe of Judah.

5 In fact the king who 'built up' (*extruxit* 2 Chron 11:6 Vulg and Erasmus here) Bethlehem was David's grandson, the successor to Solomon, Rehoboam. Bethlehem was already a town, but smaller, when David was a boy (1 Sam 16:1–4).

6 The prophecy about Bethlehem is in Mic 5:2, a passage cited by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 485A–B and by Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:4). Matt 2:23 associates Nazareth with prophecy as well. The exegetical tradition had connected Nazareth's name with the word 'Nazarite,' 'Nazirite,' or 'Nazarene,' describing adherents of a particular ascetic routine described in Numbers 6. Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 137 says that 'Nazareth' means 'blossom, or its shrub, of purity,' or 'separated' or 'guarded'; at 142 he says the name means 'blossom of purity.' The interlinear *Gloss* (on 1:26) says that the mention of Nazareth in that verse indicates that the future Holy One of the holy ones shall be announced there; Nicholas of Lyra (on 1:26) says that the Vulgate *flos* in Isa 11:1 (DV 'flower'; AV 'branch') means in Hebrew *Nazareus* 'Nazarene.' The significance of these towns and of the prophecies recurs in the long paraphrase on 24:27 CWE 48 251–2.

humble little town – one in which he did not even have a home – and humble parents. Indeed he chose to be born away from home so that we would be ashamed of both our pride and our greed, and even learn from his example that a person's happiness is not to be measured by ordinary goods; for if they are not withdrawn from us, we are drawn astray by them.[7] Happiness is to be evaluated instead in terms of eternal goods, and the treasures that we will enjoy forever are to be stored up for that homeland.[8] For if we should choose to judge by true standards, there was more sublimity, more power, more majesty in the quite humble birth of Christ than in all the pomps and triumphs of all the Caesars.

In Bethlehem, then, which means 'house of bread,' the holy young Virgin brought forth for us the heavenly bread; whoever eats of this bread will never die.[9] And this was the one and only virgin birth; nothing like it ever happened either before or after. To his mother he was an only child; to us he was the firstborn, for he made us his brothers in spirit and joint heirs with him of an everlasting heritage, so that he would not come to the Father alone but like a firstborn would bring many brothers with him to share eternal salvation.[10] When the wee babe was born his mother did not hand him over to nurses, whom out of piety she did not want and out of poverty did not have, but herself wrapped him in swaddling bands.[11] And since there

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7 For 'withdrawn ... drawn astray' Erasmus uses forms of the same verb, exploiting the opportunity for a wordplay: *subducuntur . . . subducimur*.

8 'Homeland' is *patriam*, as in Heb 11:14–16 Vulg.

9 The definition of 'Bethlehem' as 'house of bread' is not in Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis*, though it is elsewhere in Jerome, eg Ep 108 PL 22 885; it also is in Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 489B and Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 8 PL 76 1104A, repeated by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 330C, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 2:4), Hugh of St Cher (on 2:4 and 7) 140v, and the *Catena aurea* (on 2:6). Bede and Hugh both reserve the definition and its connection with Jesus the bread of life (cf John 6:35–58) for the end of their accounts of the trip to Bethlehem, as Erasmus does here, rather than at the first appearance of Bethlehem in verse 4; Cyril's discussion is in connection with the announcement to the shepherds in verse 15.

10 Cf Rom 8:29. Similar explanations of how an only child can be called a 'first born' are found in Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 485B–D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 331A–B, and in more summary form in the interlinear *Gloss* (on 2:7), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 721B, the *Catena aurea* (on 2:7), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:7).

11 For Erasmus' general opinion of wet nurses for infants, see the *1526* colloquy *Puerpera* 'The New Mother' CWE 39 590–607, especially 595–606 and *Ecclesiastes* CWE 68 521, 541–3, 585, 1096 n517.
'Swaddling bands' is *fasciolis*. The Vulgate word was *pannis* 'rags,' also found in verse 12 and elsewhere below, where Erasmus will say *fasciis* 'bands,' of which

was no other place for a new mother in the public inn because of the crowd of visitors, she laid the child in a manger.

Listen, proud rich man, you who heap acres upon acres, who construct houses, manors, palaces everywhere: he who is both Lord and creator of heaven and earth, and with whom you registered in your baptism, is born far from home and has not even a place in an inn! If you recognize your Prince, to whom you swore your oath, do not be embarrassed to imitate his example, do not let your conscience shame you!

Now hear how the complete lowliness of his birth is full of grandeur. Not far from Bethlehem was the tower of Eder, that is, 'of the flock' in Hebrew, because there was a large number of sheep there on account of the common grazing ground. Indeed, Micah's prophecy mentions the tower, as it does Bethlehem.[12] So there were in that region shepherds who were keeping night watches over their flocks, teaching by this very fact what bishops, on the model of the Prince of pastors, ought to do for the salvation of the people entrusted to them. Also it was at night that the sun of righteousness was born, who will scatter the darkness of the world.[13] He preferred to become known first to the lowly as himself lowly, to shepherds as himself a

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fasciolis is the diminutive. *Fascia* appears as a word for swaddling bands in Plautus *Truculentus* 905 and is otherwise used for 'bands' in matters of bandaging, clothing, and strapping together; see L&S at *fascia*. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 331C speaks of *pannis vilibus* 'cheap rags'; Hugh of St Cher (on 2:7) 140V notes that *pannis* implies cheapness and a worn-out state, and that the verb 'wrapped' indicates that these are swaddling bands. Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:7) points out that Mary wrapped him herself, implying that she had no female assistance. Erasmus in an annotation *et pannis* (on 2:7) had said that the Greek verb here, which has no direct object, means in effect 'swaddled' *infasciavit*, a Latin verb apparently of his own invention, which he went on to explain as *fasciis involvit* 'wrapped in bands,' lest anyone think of ragged scraps. In *1522* he expanded this annotation, arguing that there is no need to suppose the fabric Mary used was scraps ragged with age; Mary's humble circumstances in his opinion were *munda* 'clean,' implying in this context 'decent' or 'respectable.'

12 This description of a tower of Eder (Ader in the Latin text) or 'tower of the flock,' with Ader defined as meaning 'flock' by Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 61 (on Gen 35:21) and 88, is given by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 332A–B citing Mic 4:8; the distance from Bethlehem is given by Jerome *De locis Hebraicis* PL 23 879A, also alluding to Mic 4:8. Bede is followed by Hugh of St Cher (on 2:8) 141R.

13 'Were keeping night watches' is *nocturnas excubias agebant*. Valla *Annot in Lucam* had been dismissive of the Vulgate Latin here that seemed to repeat needlessly that the shepherds were both 'watching' and 'keeping watch,' while the Greek says that they were 'in the field' and 'keeping guard.' Erasmus uses

shepherd, rather than to emperors, kings, governors, Pharisees, scribes, high priests. And behold, suddenly the angel Gabriel from on high hovered over their heads, and a strange light, which was neither sunlight nor moonlight nor lamplight, at once shone around the shepherds.[14] Though this was a good omen, because of the unusual and unexpected marvel the shepherds were seized with great alarm.

But the angel soon took away the fear with his soothing address: 'Lay aside your alarm,' he said; 'there is no reason for you to be anxious. I am the messenger of a very happy event, and I bring a joy unheard of till now – not to you alone but to the whole Israelite people.[15] The words of the prophets had long since promised you a saviour; long since has a Messiah been looked

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Valla's suggestion of the Latin noun *excubias*, which suggests more strongly that the guard duty is out of doors.

That the shepherds (*pastores*) and their flocks (*greges*) are figures for the relationship between pastors and people, and between bishops and their flocks of pastors, is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1652C, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 489A (who cites 1 Pet 5:4 'Prince of pastors'), Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 8 PL 76 1104B (quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 332B, adding a reference to 1 Pet 5:2), the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 2:8), Hugh of St Cher (on 2:8 *mystice*) 141r. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 724A–B (on 2:11) and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:8) add a contrast like that in Erasmus' next sentence, between the simple people who are granted a divine light and those wise in worldly ways. For the sun of righteousness, cf chapter 1 65 and the end of n125 there.

14 Erasmus deduces that the angelic messenger is Gabriel, named here and below in the paraphrase, from the occurrence of the name (unique to Luke) in 1:19 and 26. See Fitzmyer AB Luke 327–8 and 343 on those verses.

The paraphrase emphasizes Erasmus' view that the angels appeared more above the shepherds than near (*iuxta*) them, as he had suggested in the annotation *stetit iuxta illos* (on 2:9). In an associated annotation *et claritas* (on 2:9) he follows Valla *Annot in Lucam*, who says that the Greek word δόξα in this verse means not 'brightness' but 'glory.' His paraphrase, however, expresses the experience as an unearthly light, thus accommodating the Vulgate. The quality of the light is commented on by Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 8 PL 76 1104B, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 332B and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:9).

15 Hugh of St Cher (on 2:10) 141r repeats here the gist of his remark on 1:13, that it is customary for angels to allay the fears of good people to whom they appear. The phrase 'all people' in the Gospel text is taken to mean the whole church of believers who will become the new Israel by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 332C, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PL 123 724B, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 2:10), Hugh of St Cher (on 2:10) 141v, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:10). In paraphrasing the two canticles of chapter 1, Erasmus had already emphasized that the definition of 'Israel' and 'Israelite' was about to be expanded; see the paraphrases on 1:49–55 and 68–9, 73–5, 78–9 with the notes there.

for. He has been born this night and born for you all. He is the Messiah, Prince and Lord of all, both priest and king, anointed from on high.[16] And he has been born according to the prophets' words, in the city of David whose name is Bethlehem, on this very night.

'Go and seek him out. I will give you a sign by which he can be recognized. Go to the inn, and you will find the wee babe all wrapped in swaddling bands and laid in a manger.'[17]

When Gabriel finished his announcement, at once there was the sound of a vast multitude of the heavenly host, that is, of the angels who are the servants of the Lord mighty in battle and who do battle for us against the princes of this world.[18] In an inexpressible heavenly chant they sang praises to God, declaring his indescribable love for the human race and rejoicing with humankind, on whom so great a blessing had fallen by reason of the favour of divine power.

And the hymn that the angelic chorus sang was this: 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will among men.'[19] Now this is what

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16 Erasmus replaces the Gospel text's *Christus* with *Messias*, the (Latinized) Hebrew word it translates. Hugh of St Cher (on 2:11) 141v notes that *Christus* means 'anointed.' Jesus as 'priest and king' alludes to Melchizedek in Gen 14:18, Ps 110:4, Heb 7:1–3. This theme recurs in the long paraphrase on 24:27; see CWE 48 240–51, especially 245–8.

17 'Laid' here is *reclinatum*, participle of the same verb used earlier in the Vulgate verse 7, though the Greek text and the Vulgate use other verbs here in verse 12. 'Swaddling bands' is again *fasciis*. Erasmus' annotation *involutum pannis* (on 2:12), his second on the implications of *pannis* (cf n11), repeats that we are not to think of beggars' rags here; while he willingly concedes *tenuitatem et paupertatem* 'insignificance and modest circumstances' to Jesus' parents, he thinks them far removed from dirt and beggary; it was the crowding, not poverty, that prevented Mary from giving birth in a proper room.

18 The heavenly host is explained as the angelic army serving the leader (*dux*) or Lord (*dominus*) mighty in battle (Ps 24:8) by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 333C. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1653A–B, Hugh of St Cher (on 2:13) 142r, the *Catena aurea* (on 2:13), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:13), though all in different language, also define the military role of this host.

19 'Good will among men' is *in hominibus bona voluntas*. Erasmus here, as in his NT text, follows Valla *Annot in Lucam* and Greek texts supported by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 12 PL 26 261B–C, Chrysostom *In Col* 1 hom 3, 4 PG 62 321 (who there quotes and discusses this text), and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 724A in reading 'good will' as εὐδοκία, the nominative case parallel to 'glory' and 'peace', rather than εὐδοκίας, the genitive case, meaning '(men) of good will' as translated in the Vulgate. This reading and his annotation *hominibus bonae voluntatis* (on 2:14) provoked dissent from Edward Lee, Noël Béda, and Pierre Cousturier; Erasmus responded to each individually (to Lee: *Responsio*

the angels' song means for us: no glory in this affair is owed to angels or mortals; but all the glory is owed to God's goodness, which in his marvellous purpose provides from heaven for us whom he has made, so we may understand that whatever grand or wholesome thing happens to us comes from there; on earth nothing else is to be wished for but the peace that takes away sins and reconciles us to God, the peace that cements us together in mutual love. For such peace is not the world's but God's peace that passes all understanding and outweighs all the world's blessings. It is offered freely through the mediator of God and men, not by the intervention of our merits but from the loving-kindness well disposed towards us on God's part, who thought it best to see to the salvation of the human race in this amazing fashion.

When the angels had sung this birthday song in happy voices to the shepherds, they withdrew into heaven. In response to these events the simple group of shepherds formed a plan among themselves, having no doubt about the angels' words but being eager to learn more fully about what they had heard. So they said to each other, 'Let us follow the angel's advice. Let us set out from here for Bethlehem, so we can see with our own eyes that what we heard with our ears has happened.[20] And then we can tell others more

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ad annotationes Lei Notes 30–1 CWE 72 122–31; to Béda: *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* 13 LB IX 491F; to Cousturier: *Apologia adversus Petrum Sutorem* LB IX 768C) and enlarged the annotation in every edition till it filled three pages in *1535*. See the notes to the annotations on Luke in ASD VI-5 477–81. He also explained his interpretation at some length in a 1526 letter to Francesco Cigalini, Ep 1680 CWE 12 92–100.

In general Erasmus is not so concerned about the case ending of εὐδοκία as he is about the meaning of the word and the whole interpretation of the song, which follows that of Origen, Chrysostom, and Theophylact just cited. To summarize his arguments, the song has three parts distinguished by the nouns 'glory,' the quality appropriate to God alone; and 'peace,' which is radically different from what humans call peace, being the peace that passes all understanding (Phil 4:7) and therefore being Jesus himself (Eph 2:14). The third word, 'good will,' also refers to God, not to human feelings; it is often translated in biblical Latin by *beneplacitum* 'good pleasure, gracious purpose' (eg Eph 1:9, Pss 69:14 and 88:18) and marks the reconciliation of God and mortals that God provides by the Incarnation. This understanding of the three words, all referring to God's gift on this occasion, is developed in the paraphrasing sentences that follow. Cf the discussion by Fitzmyer AB Luke 410–12 for a modern treatment of the issues.

20 Erasmus here paraphrases verse 15 in a way that avoids using the Vulgate *verbum* 'word' from the Gospel verse (DV 'Let us see this word that is come to pass'; AV 'Let us see this thing that is come to pass'). Earlier Latin commentators interpreted *verbum* as the 'Word made flesh' of John 1:14 with its attendant theological implications: so Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1653B and Bede *In*

confidently what the Lord has condescended to announce to us through his angels.' Everyone was agreeable to the reverent plan. The shepherds made haste; reverence prodded their hearts. They arrived in Bethlehem; they got to the inn. There, just as the angel promised, they found Mary the new mother, and Joseph the witness to the virgin birth, and the child too, encased in swaddling bands and settled down in a manger.[21]

By no means did the humble circumstances of the young Virgin offend these reverent shepherds, nor did the husband lowly in the world's eyes, nor the infant laid in a manger for lack of a more suitable place, all of which would have put off proud Pharisees and scribes. Rather, the shepherds were encouraged by these same circumstances to a firmer readiness of belief when they discovered, with their own eyes as witnesses, that what the angel had reported was no empty fiction. Then too, reverence in people however humble has its own good sense; for they did not immediately publicize what they had heard. Only when they had ascertained its truth were they not afraid

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Lucam expos PL 92 334A–B, both quoted by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 2:15); Hugh of St Cher (on 2:15) 142v; and the *Catena aurea* (on 2:15). In his annotation *verbum hoc quod factum est* (on 2:15) Erasmus declined to comment on such interpretations of *verbum*, remarking only that Augustine pointed out that 'a word' was a Hebrew idiom for a piece of news that was being spread about, and that the Vulgate's *quod Dominus ostendit nobis* 'that the Lord has showed us' was a poor translation of the Greek verb ἐγνώρισεν 'made known,' since a word is not a visible object; in *1527* he added that *verbum* represented ῥῆμα in the Greek text, not λόγος. Cf his long annotation *in principio erat verbum* (on John 1:1) and the paraphrase on that passage in CWE 46 17 with the notes there, and the Greek and Latin indices to other CWE *Paraphrases* and *Annotations*.

For the pairing of eyes and ears as witnesses of truth, see eg Isa 64:4, 1 Cor 2:9, and 1 John 1:1–2. The theme of eyewitness as reliable evidence for faith was addressed in the paraphrase on the prologue to this Gospel, 20, and is a general theme of the long paraphrase on 24:27 CWE 48 235–70, where the invented words of the resurrected Jesus repeatedly exhort the two disciples on the road to Emmaus to compare what they have heard in OT prophecy to their own eyewitness experience and to what they have heard from other disciples.

21 'Encased' is *obvinctum*, from *obvincire* 'bind about, wrap tightly,' a word apparently found first in the Renaissance and used several times by Erasmus: in his commentary on Ovid's *Nux* ASD I-1 152:2 / CWE 29 135, on binding trees to promote fertility; in the colloquy *Puerpera* 'The New Mother' ASD I-3 453:6 / CWE 39 591, on the 'crow' or knocker wrapped up in front of a house to announce the happy arrival of an infant inside; and in the *Moria* ASD IV-3 158:512 (with the editor's note) / CWE 27 130, on bindings as headgear for professors overfull of their own bright ideas. This is its first appearance in Erasmus' account of the nativity; he had used the classical and Vulgate verbs *involvere* in the paraphrase on verse 7 and *obvolvere* in that on verse 8, both translated 'wrapped' above.

to declare to others also what they had been told. Christ was fond of being proclaimed first by heralds of this kind, on whose honesty no suspicion of fiction or falsehood fell. They did not know how to make up lies, they did not know how to invent visions. What they had heard and seen, as they had heard and seen it, they reported faithfully to good-hearted people. And the shepherds' words found credence with many, and stirred many to a desire to see the child.[22]

And here reflect with me on the thoughtful reserve of the holy young Virgin. She learned from the shepherds what the angel had announced, what the choir of heavenly host had sung; she herself stayed quiet in solitude, keeping in mind what had happened earlier and now, and carefully pondering it in her heart. The mystery of the virgin conception she left unmentioned until the time should be right; she did not boast of her blessedness among others. She had promised herself as the handmaid of the divine creator; a handmaid she showed herself to be. In silence she considered privately the strange method of the divine purpose. She reflected that everything was full of strange miracles; she saw complete lowliness mixed with complete sublimity everywhere. A baby was conceived in her womb but an angel was the intermediary and the Holy Spirit the operative agent.[23] A boy was born but from a virgin mother. He was laid in a manger, but rejoicing angels sang from heaven. He lay hidden in a place unknown, but heaven worshipped the sublimity of the newborn.[24]

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22 Part of the exegetical tradition had stressed the humble circumstances of the shepherds in the previous episode: Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1653C, commenting on 2:15, said that the Lord wanted simple people to believe in him and that is why his first visitors were humble shepherds. Hugh of St Cher (on 2:10) 141r–v said that one reason for the announcement of the birth to shepherds was that they were among the poor for whom Jesus came, adding an allusion to 6:20, and another reason was that they were simple and innocent and thus readier to believe and obey. Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:8), citing Matt 11:25, said that shepherds are simple and without malice and not in possession of the worldly wisdom that is foolishness with God.

23 'Intermediary' is *internuntius*, a word Erasmus had also used of Gabriel making his announcement to Zechariah; cf the paraphrase on 1:19, 35. For 'operative agent' (*opifex*), cf chapter 1 n72.

24 Mary's thoughtful reserve is treated as exemplary for learners of both sexes by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1634A. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 335D–336A repeats his earlier remark that Mary is reflecting on what she has *read* in OT prophecy and comparing it with her recent experiences, but staying quiet until the right time; see chapter 1 n70. The same ideas appear abbreviated in the *Gloss* (on 2:19) and Hugh of St Cher (on 2:19) 142v. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam*

Once all this had taken place as described, the shepherds returned to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all that they had been told by the angels and for having found everything as they had been told.

But when the eighth day after his birth came, the day on which the law of Moses requires a male child to be circumcised, with the snipping of a tiny bit of the tip of his foreskin (for God wanted that to be the sign of his people, starting from Abraham), even in this regard the Law was satisfied. For he had come not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it.[25] And as if bound by the sins of his parents, he did not disdain to receive the remedy, though he alone was free from all contamination from sin and would draw to himself a new people whose heart was cleansed of all desires of the flesh – and do so not by knives of stone but by the sword of the gospel word that cleanses all things by faith.[26] For he was named Jesus, which means 'Saviour' in Hebrew.[27] Not by accident or human choice was this the name given to the child; it had been bestowed on him by divine authority through Gabriel before he was

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PG 123 725A–B says that the 'words' Mary kept in her heart are the words in Luke's narrative and the events they represent, not just the angel's song and the shepherds' description of what they had seen. The *Catena aurea* (on 2:19) cites 'a Greek' as saying she compared what the angel had said to her and what the shepherds reported, and concluded that her child was indeed the Son of God.

25 For Abraham and circumcision, cf Gen 17:11–14. 'Not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it': see Matt 5:17. The exegetical tradition points out that this child was by nature exempt from circumcision but underwent it anyway: Origen *Hom in Lucam* 14 PL 26 263A–B, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 496B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 336C–340D, Hugh of St Cher (on 2:21) 143r, the *Catena aurea* (on 2:21), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:21).

26 The clause 'he alone was free ... from sin' in Noël Béda's view contradicted the statement in chapter 1 45 where Erasmus had said that only Mary was free from every stain of sin. Erasmus replied in the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 491F–492A that Mary could be free from sin in her own self without being free from original sin; and that she still had the capacity to sin by making a mistake or out of ignorance, which has something like the stain of sin about it. Further, Christ is called the only one free from sin as a mark of his unqualified excellence, as we say God alone is good or immortal or powerful, even if these characteristics are found to some degree in others. He referred to this reply again in the *Supputatio* LB IX 603A.
Would draw to himself' echoes John 12:32; for 'knives of stone' cf Josh 5:2–3 and for 'sword of the gospel word' Eph 6:17.

27 The definition of the name 'Saviour' is given at Matt 1:21 (see the paraphrase on that passage CWE 45 44) and elaborated here by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 338A–B. For 'Saviour' Erasmus again uses *servator* instead of *salvator*; cf chapter 1 n93. Noël Béda had found something in this passage objectionable; Erasmus supposes it is his preference for *servator* over *salvator* and explains that the

conceived in the Virgin's womb, so that directly from the word itself mortals might be advised that he was the one who would bring true healing to all and, reflecting the historical leader Joshua, would cleanse his followers from every stain of sin and lead them into the heavenly land that abounds in eternal joys.[28]

Up to this point there had been a rehearsal for preaching the gospel to the Jews in various figures. On the fifth day after the circumcision three wise men arrived, roused in a distant land by the sign of a star to come and see the child. They worshipped the new Prince of the world and honoured him with mystic gifts, thus indicating in a image of things to come that gentiles would embrace the grace of the gospel when it had been repudiated by the murdering Jews.[29]

Again, when it was almost the fortieth[30] day after the birth, when the Law requires a firstborn[31] male child to be presented to the Lord and a gift to be offered for the purification of both the new mother and the newborn child – because ordinary childbirth in women is not without physical uncleanness – not even here did our young Virgin most modest shun the manner

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former is more classical Latin though both terms mean the same thing, *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 492B. Cf L&S at each word, CWE 45 351 n47 and 50 87 n56.

28 In this Gospel Gabriel announces the name of the unconceived child at 1:31. Josh 5:2–7 reports Joshua's cleansing of the Israelites; that and the following six chapters describe him leading the people into the promised land. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 339C points to Joshua as a forerunner of Jesus.

29 Here Erasmus takes very brief note of the arrival of the Magi, a story not mentioned by Luke but told in detail in Matt 2:1–12, where it also follows a report (Matt 1:25) of the naming of the child, the other event on the occasion of a circumcision. The exegetical tradition had established that the visit of the Magi took place on the thirteenth day after the birth (traditionally at midnight of 24–5 December), ie the fifth day after the circumcision, and so on 6 January, the feast of the Epiphany. Cf eg Augustine *Sermo in Epiphania* 5 PL 38 1035, the *Gloss* (on Matt 2:1), Hugh of St Cher (on Matt 2:1), the *Catena aurea* (on Matt 2:1–3), Thomas Aquinas *Lectura super evangelium Matthaei* 1.2 (on Matt 2:1), and Nicholas of Lyra (on Matt 2:9). Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.5 PL 34 1077–84 has a long synoptic account of the infancy narrative, in which he inserts Matt 2:1b–13a, the whole Magi narrative, between Luke 2:21 and 22. Hugh of St Cher (on 2:22) 143v notes that Luke omits the visit of the Magi here, and the flight into Egypt later, in full knowledge that someone else had told these stories.

30 In *1523* and *1524* the text read *quadragesimo secundo* 'forty-second'; it was corrected to 'fortieth' in *1534* and *1535*. Béda included the error in his criticisms of this *Paraphrase*, and Erasmus replied that it was a typesetter's error from his handwritten manuscript, in which numerals appeared instead of words, *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 492B and *Declarationes* CWE 82 159–60.

31 'firstborn' added in *1534* and *1535*. Purification after childbirth: Leviticus 12.

of ordinary new mothers, though in this childbirth there was nothing defiled, nothing not full of celestial purity and holiness.[32] For what impurity would a new mother have who had conceived without a man's touch, from the embrace of heavenly power, and by the work[33] of the Holy Spirit? Or could there be anything filthy in a baby divinely born who came in order that he alone might cleanse the whole human race from all the filth of its sins? But in such notable examples of modesty God wanted to shatter human pride. At the same time it was fitting that he who had come to join two walls,[34] that is, the peoples of the Jews and gentiles, into the same proclamation of the gospel would satisfy the law of Moses in every way, for from it would come the first confirmation and authority for the gospel. So his mother and Joseph, who by God's established purpose was still believed to be the father of Jesus, took their baby to Jerusalem to be presented[35] in the temple in the sight of the Lord, to whom he had been dedicated and consecrated – not that all things are not the Lord's, but that we might be taught by the mystic image that those souls are most pleasing to the Lord who with manly strength of spirit, having defeated the lusts of the, so to say, womanish flesh, move on to things that are celestial and everlasting.[36]

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32 In the annotation *dies purificationis eius* (on 2:22), meaning 'the day of ['his' or 'her'] purification,' Erasmus reports that he has seen Greek manuscripts that say variously αὐτοῦ 'his,' αὐτῆς 'her,' and αὐτῶν 'their.' Valla *Annot in Lucam* had said that the Greek text read 'their.' The last of these, Erasmus says, is also in Origen, so purification is for two or more persons. See Origen *Hom in Lucam* 14 and 18 PL 26 264A and 277B, who argues that this purification is required for mother and child not because it is a question of sin but only because every soul clad in human flesh has thereby the filth of flesh, citing Job 14:4–5 and Zec 3:3. The exegetical tradition in general says here that Mary voluntarily obeys the Law though her particular circumstances do not put her under its requirements: Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 501C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 341C, the *Gloss* (on 2:22), and Hugh of St Cher (on 2:22) 144r.

33 'Work' *is opificium* in the lifetime editions, but LB VII 301B prints *officium* 'duty' or 'service,' with a note that *opificium* appears in 'another edition.' See chapter 1 44 with n72, and this chapter n23.

34 'Join two walls' evokes the image of Christ the cornerstone. Cf 20:17, Ps 118:22, Isa 28:16, Mark 12:10, Acts 4:11, Eph 2:19–21, 1 Pet 2:4 and 6. Most of these passages are echoed again at the appearance of this image in the long paraphrase on 24:27 CWE 48 242.

35 'Presented' is *exhiberetur*. Erasmus here uses one of the two verbs he had suggested in an annotation *ut sisterent* (on 2:22), explaining that the Greek verb being translated, παραστῆσαι 'set before,' connotes in Latin either 'present' (*exhibere*) or 'entrust' (*commendare*).

36 'Manly ... womanish.' A common enough gendered metaphor for virtue and vice in traditional philosophy and religion. The *Catena aurea* on 2:22 cites

In allusion to this the law of Moses had prescribed that every male who opens his mother's womb and comes into the light is to be considered sacred to the Lord, whether born of humans or of brute animals, so that here too the first fruits belong to the priests, with the exception that the human firstborn is redeemed from the priests (unless he is a child of the tribe of Levi).[37] But the Law itself clearly released the holy new mother from her obligation, because it says in Leviticus, 'If a woman receives seed and bears a male.' Indeed, she was not a woman, for she did not know a man, nor had she received seed from somewhere before she gave birth.[38] Again, when it says, 'Every male first opening the womb,' it clearly shows that it means the ordinary childbirth of women, who after their seal of virginity has been broken by a man give birth not without filth and not without shame. But this heavenly infant did not violate the bars of the virgin womb by his entry or his exit;[39] rather, he consecrated it and sealed it up, so that in future neither

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Gregory of Nyssa saying, 'Only this birth is seen to be spiritually masculine, for it carried with it nothing of the womanishness of sin; hence it is truly called holy.' Cf also Erasmus' *Enchiridion* CWE 66 25.

37 For the rules about firstborn males see Exod 13:2 and 12. Hugh of St Cher (on 2:23) 144r notes the special situation of the Levites; see Numbers 3.

38 The Vulgate word for 'woman' in Lev 12:2 is *mulier*; Erasmus therefore denies that Mary was a 'woman' *mulier* who had conceived, on the grounds that she remained a *virgo* 'virgin.' See his remarks in chapter 1 about the absence of respect for virginity before the replacement of the Old Law by the New, 28. The uniqueness of Jesus' birth, taking place from a conception and a parturition that did not violate his mother's virginity, is rehearsed by the exegetical tradition in discussion of this verse (as well as often elsewhere): Origen *Hom in Lucam* 14 PL 26 266B–267A, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 501C, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1654C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 342A, the *Gloss* (on 2:23), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 728A–B, Hugh of St Cher (on 2:23) 144r, the *Catena aurea* (on 2:23) quoting many of these.

39 In the annotation *adaperiens vulvam* (on 2:23) Erasmus had taken mild exception to a 'plausible and not irreligious' interpretation of the virgin birth that asserted that Mary's infant had glided mysteriously out of her womb without the effort and pain of childbirth and had thus not caused violation of her virginity by opening her womb. He cites 'Origen or whoever it is' in the passage listed in the preceding note as saying that 'opening the womb' is just a Hebraism for 'being born,' and that Jesus did open his mother's womb but in such a way as not to tear the bar of her virginity. While Erasmus declares himself unwilling to do battle for this opinion, he does invoke Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1655A, who attributes to Jesus the power of being born, ie opening his mother's womb, so that he could emerge without stain. The paraphrase here avoids confirming or denying belief in an effortless delivery but asserts the preservation of the 'bars of virginity' and the womb's permanent sealing, a point defended in

her body, the (so to say) temple[40] once dedicated to God, nor her heart, the perfume chest of the Holy Spirit,[41] was open to any human defilement. So he was presented in the temple as if he were bound by the Law, though he was Lord of all things in heaven and on earth.

And he who would redeem the whole world at the price of his own blood was redeemed for a small price. For the Law had prescribed that the

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the tradition by reference to Ezek 44:1–3, where the closed gate of the temple, which only the Lord may use, is described. Cf Erasmus' *Obsecratio ad Virginem Mariam* (*Prayer of Supplication to Mary*; 1504) CWE 69 47 for the more traditional view; and his *Explanatio symboli* (1533) CWE 70 290–1 with n80, omitting that particular point.

'By his entry or his exit.' *nec ingrediens nec egrediens* echoes the wording of the interlinear *Gloss* (on 2:23), which paraphrases Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 342A.

40 'Her body . . . temple' is *corpus illius . . . templum* in the lifetime editions; LB VII 301E reads instead *corporis ipsius . . . templum* 'temple of the body itself.' In either case the expression can be taken as an allusion to 1 Cor 3:16 and 6:19 or even to apocryphal stories of the child Mary, such as in the 'Proto-Gospel of James' in Ehrman *Lost Scriptures* (chapter 1 n79) 6–7.

41 'Perfume chest' is *myrothecium*. For the association of fragrance with the virtues of Mary, see the *Obsecratio ad Virginem Mariam* (*Prayer of Supplication to Mary*) CWE 69 46 with n30. *Myrothecium* is a rare word, first in Cicero *Ad Atticum* 2.1.1 to describe the store of rhetorical ornaments from Isocrates he has used recently, along with 'cosmetics' from Aristotle. Erasmus uses this sense too in Ep 1332, early January 1523 (CWE 9 228, where the translator elegantly paraphrases 'breathes all the perfumes of the Muses' for a more literal 'smells of the perfume chests of the Muses'). An Italian humanist he admired, Angelo Poliziano, had done the same in a 1485 letter, *Epistolarum liber* 3 in *Opera omnia* (Basel: Nicolaus Episcopius junior 1553) I 31. The Latin form, a diminutive, has no exact Greek equivalent, but the parent word μυροθήκη appears occasionally in Greek ecclesiastical language: one example is in a prayer attributed to Romanus the Melodist, describing the Virgin as the 'perfume chest of the Spirit' in P. Maas and C.A. Trypanis *Sancti Romani Melodi Cantica: Cantica dubia* (Berlin 1970) no 84, line 28; another is in a hymn by Joannes Monachus describing St Blasius as a 'perfume chest of the Holy Spirit and a good odour of Christ' PG 96 1401D. Both are ninth century or earlier; Erasmus might have come across them during his time in Italy (1506–9), especially among Greek scholars at the Aldine press in Venice. A ninth-century Latin martyrology by Ado of Vienne PL 123 277A describes the imprisoned Attalus of Pergamum and his companions as 'made the good odour of Christ, so that they thought they were shut up not in prison but in a perfume chest' (*myrothecio*). Around the same time as the appearance of this *Paraphrase* Erasmus used the term to speak of the 'perfume chests of Holy Scripture' LB V 589B (translated 'perfume flasks' in CWE 69 159) in the second edition of Ep 1346, a salutation to a convent of nuns, prefacing an essay he wrote for them, *Virginis et martyri comparatio*.

parents of a firstborn male were to redeem him with a yearling lamb, which was given for a burnt offering; then a pigeon or a turtledove was to be added if any irregularity had occurred during or after sexual congress.[42] For what is to be offered to God should be pure in every respect. But if straitened family circumstances did not allow a lamb to be purchased, then in place of the lamb a turtledove or a young pigeon was given to redeem a male child. The other bird was given for the expiation of sin. So they offered the poor people's gift; doubtless they would have given more generously if their slender means had not prevented it. Their heart was rich in reverence, but the admission of poverty was more useful to provide a model for us.

And all these things appeared in this way by dispensation of the divine purpose, for many reasons but especially this one, that the reality of the child's human nature might be clearly shown by so many proofs. At the inn it was seen in her swelling belly; once she had given birth, the bodily swelling soon went down. The shepherds discovered the newborn infant, the wise men worshipped him, he was circumcised in the usual way. Again, he was brought to the temple and publicly presented to the priests. The result of these events was that no one could be in doubt about the birth, and also that it gradually became known to more people, though mostly just to the humble and godly. For it was fitting that the thing that, when it was believed, would bring everlasting salvation to all generations (and when it was not believed, eternal death) should be confirmed by proofs neither few in number nor commonplace. An angel makes the announcement; the husband Joseph is provided as witness; barren Elizabeth gives birth; mute Zechariah speaks; both are seized by a spirit of prophecy. John in his mother's womb leaps for joy; a virgin produces a child; foreign wise men hurry to him and worship; shepherds declare him. With all these proofs, all these wonders, the birth of the child recommends itself while it is still new.[43]

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42 See Lev 15:16–33.

43 In the latter part of this paragraph Erasmus elaborates and imitates a heaping up of short statements by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1655B that express the evidence on all sides for the birth of the Lord: 'Not just from angels and prophets, from shepherds and his own parents, but also from righteous elders does the birth of the Lord receive affirmation. Every age and both sexes and the miracles of the events provide credibility [*fides*; see chapter 1 n1]. A virgin conceives, a barren woman gives birth, a magus adores, one still in the womb leaps for joy, a widow proclaims, a righteous man awaits.' Ambrose is quoted in more or less detail by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 344A, the *Gloss* (on 2:25), and the *Catena aurea* (on 2:25); Erasmus will repeat the point and the rhetorical approach below, 87. This is a form of abundance in subject matter recommended by him in *De copia* CWE 24 591–4, Method 8, in which various details of

Now, lest he not obtain witness from every sex and age, every sort and condition, and lest anyone at all be left behind who might assure himself of salvation from this child: There was at that time in Jerusalem a man by the name of Simeon, already cold with age but fervent in spirit, worn out in body but vigorous in mind, withered by the passage of time but flourishing in innocence of life, without doubt truly righteous, truly godly and devout,[44] not hunting, like the Pharisees, for glory and gain from other people but eager for the general welfare; a man whom no desire kept lingering in this life but to see with his own eyes the one who the sayings of the prophets had promised would come to bring comfort to the much afflicted people of Israel.

He, good man that he was, recognized by inspiration of the Holy Spirit that the day was near. And after he had besought the Lord in ardent prayers that it be his lot to gaze just once with his body's eyes upon the Messiah expected now for so many generations, he received in the depths of his godly heart an answer from the Holy Spirit: he would not pass from this life without first seeing with his bodily eyes the one he had long since foreseen with the eyes of faith. Thus he could then testify that the one he did not doubt would come had come, the blessed child whom God had anointed above all mortals to take possession of an eternal kingship and a priesthood that would never be abolished.[45]

So when the child Jesus was about to be brought to the temple, as we said, that blessed old man, alerted by the inspiration of the Spirit, came into the temple at almost the same time. And Mary and Joseph (who then was still thought to be the child's father[46]) brought the baby into the temple to complete the things that concerned the usual rites of purification. After the child was presented and the priest had embraced and blessed him, the old man's reverent devotion did not keep him from also clasping the longed-for wee babe in his arms. At the same time the voice soon to fall silent broke out in praise of God, pouring forth a kind of swan song,[47] saying,

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a situation are amassed for confirmation or credibility, and Method 9, in which such details or other kinds of material can be arranged with ascending impact.

44 'Godly and devout' (*pius ac religiosus*). In the annotation *timoratus* (on 2:25) Erasmus had objected to the Vulgate's Latinized Greek word to translate εὐλαβής, which he says means *pius* or *religiosus*. In the paraphrase he uses both these words.

45 A theme taken up again from the paraphrase on 2:11; see n16.

46 Hugh of St Cher (on 2:27) 145r describes Joseph here as *pater putativus* 'the supposed father.'

47 'Swan song' is *cygneam cantionem*; see *Adagia* I ii 55. There Erasmus reports the use of the expression in several Greek and Roman authors, including Jerome, and in a poem of his own in honour of William Warham, archbishop of Canterbury,

'My prayers, Lord, are fulfilled. Now I shall die willingly and happily, because you are letting your servant go with his heart soothed and peaceful, and wanting nothing further in this life, but even eager to depart from this poor aged body to the blessed company of godly people who had looked for this day but succeeded in seeing it only with the spiritual eyes of faith.[48]

'My prayers have been more abundantly fulfilled because it has been allotted me to see with my body's eyes too, it has been granted me to hold in my aged arms your only Son, through whom you have determined to bestow true salvation not only on the people of Israel but also on all the nations of the world. In this humble little body I recognize your power.[49] I recognize that he is the light of the world promised in the sayings of the prophets; he is the sun that you have wished to rise in order to scatter the darkness of all the gentiles and in order that your people Israel might have one in whom they may deservedly boast – truly your people, I say, not just those according to the flesh, though from them has come the beginning of salvation, but according to the spiritual relationship which is formed by gospel faith. For anyone who turns reverent eyes to this light and bursts into the kingdom of heaven in the violence of his faith[50] is Israel. Before now the people of the Jews boasted in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; it boasted in Moses, the temple, the prophets. From now on the spiritual Israel, which is spread throughout the whole world, will boast in your Son, whom you have deigned to send last of all, as being greater than all. Now indeed he lies hidden, known to few, but later his light will flash forth, to bring with his rays light to all the regions of the universe.'[51]

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CWE 85 poem 65. For the place of the song of Simeon in the Daily Office, see chapter 1 n127 and the end of n51 below.

48 The exegetical tradition here clarifies that the release or letting go of which Simeon speaks refers to dying, not an idiom commonly found in Scripture, as Augustine had pointed out on Num 20:30 *Locutio in Heptateuchum* 4 PL 34 527. Erasmus cited that passage in his annotation *nunc dimittis* (on 2:29); so also Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 504B and Hugh of St Cher (on 2:29) 145r.

49 The contrast of old age and infancy, and of infant helplessness with divine power, is also noted in the exegetical tradition by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 344B, followed by the *Gloss* (on 2:28).

50 'And bursts into the kingdom of heaven in the violence of his faith' was added in *1534*. The image is found in Matt 11:11–12 and its paraphrase CWE 45 185–6, Luke 16:16 and its paraphrase CWE 48 97, the paraphrase on John 4:38 CWE 46 60 with n56, as well as repeatedly below, in the paraphrases on 2:32; 3:1; 5:7; 7:35, 38, and 50; and 10:2.

51 For the themes of the 'sun of righteousness' and the spiritual or new Israel, cf the paraphrase on the end of the song of Zechariah, chapter 1 66 and, for the

Then the baby's mother and Joseph,[52] observing the things spoken by the old man at the inspiration of the divine Spirit and comparing what had gone before with the present events, wondered silently what the old man's words might mean.

But when Simeon had blessed the child and also prayed for the parents,[53] he turned to Mary and said, 'Your son here has been given by God to bring salvation to everyone. But through human fault, just as he will raise many who embrace God's gift to the hope of eternal salvation, likewise many of the nation of Israel will reject the kindness of God set before them and will be cast into eternal destruction. When truth is revealed through this child,

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latter theme, the paraphrased song of Mary, chapter 1 56–7. The 'sun of righteousness' theme recurs in this chapter, 84 and in the paraphrase on verse 35. Hugh of St Cher (on 2:32) 145v again comments on this and the other two Lucan canticles; cf chapter 1 n127. Here he says that the song of Zechariah is appropriate to the morning because it mentions the raising of the horn of salvation, ie resurrection; Mary's song befits the sixth hour of the day or vespers because 'regard for his handmaiden' Mary, ie the church, took place in the sixth age; and since Simeon's song mentions the peace of departure, referring to the seventh age when the spirits of the saints will rest, as in Ecclus 44:1–15, it belongs to the final Office of the day, compline.

52 Erasmus says 'the baby's mother and Joseph' (*mater infantis et Joseph*) for the Vulgate *pater eius et mater* 'his father and mother.' In an annotation *et erat pater et mater* (on 2:33) Erasmus had said that in some Greek manuscripts he had found 'Joseph' substituted for 'father' here, which he thought was a change made by someone who hesitated to call Joseph 'father' even though Mary does just that later (in verse 48). Nonetheless he adopts the Greek reading here. That Joseph's role is to act as the boy Jesus' earthly father is expressed by Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.1 PL 34 1072, with reference to 2:33 and 40–1, and 3:23: it is the bond of marriage, not the joining of flesh, that makes Joseph Christ's father by adoption; so also Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 345D–346A, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 2:33), Hugh of St Cher (on 2:33) 145v, the *Catena aurea* (on 2:33) quoting Augustine and Bede, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:33). The interlinear *Gloss*, Hugh, and Nicholas here all describe Joseph as *nutritius* 'foster father.'

53 'Had blessed the child and also prayed for the parents' is *puero benedixisset simul et parentibus bene precatus esset* in *1534* and *1535*. In *1523* and *1524*, however, the clause ran 'had prayed for the child and also the parents,' *puero simul et parentibus bene precatus esset*. After a brief reply to Noël Béda in the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 492C, Erasmus argued in the *Supputatio* LB IX 605B–606B against Béda's claim that it was blasphemous to say that Simeon prayed *for* God, pointing to a use of the dative object in Latin grammar that does not exist in Greek and claiming Béda's distinction is invalid in biblical Latin anyway. In *1534* he inserted *benedixisset*, the word in the Vulgate text here, but did not change the case of *puero* to suit Béda's preference. He addresses the same point in the *Elenchus in censuras Bedae* LB IX 498E–499A.

those who earlier seemed to stand upright will fall, and those who seemed to be laid low will rise up. He has been looked for by all Israelites, but not all will accept him. For he will be set before all as a sign, the like of which has never been set forth since the beginning of the world, but a sign subject to opposition from many. Pharisees, scribes, and priests will cry out against him. Unbelievers and heretics will raise their voices in protest.[54] And so great a tumult will be roused on all sides that not even you yourself will be immune from a share of the evils. For not only will their savagery reach those who believe in your son, but a sword of anguish will penetrate your own soul also.[55] God decided to put before the eyes of all such a sign that when the clear light of truth was brought forth, the thoughts of mortals that were hidden in their hearts would be laid bare;[56] and, the world turned upside down, the facts themselves would make it plain[57] that those who seemed to hold the citadel

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54 The pairs of opposites in the paraphrase on verse 34 are found broadly in the exegetical tradition: see Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 346A–B, the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 2:34), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 729C–D, Hugh of St Cher (on 2:34) 145v extensively, the *Catena aurea* (on 2:34), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:24). Nicholas even cites here Jesus' instruction of the two apostles at 24:27 as an example of the illumination of those who were earlier simple and ignorant.

55 Erasmus' annotation *et tuam ipsius animam* (on 2:35), commenting on the sword that will pierce Mary's heart also, rejects the heaps of possible interpretations offered by Hugh of St Cher (on 2:35) 146r and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:35). He says, following Valla *Annot in Lucam*, that the *ipsius* emphasizes 'your' (instead of referring to Christ, as some have it), and that the meaning is easily understood: when protests are raised against Christ, a share of that pain will redound on his mother. In a second annotation *pertransibit* (on 2:35) he asserts that the Vulgate's *pertransibit* 'will pass across through' with its double prefix could mean 'pass by' and would be better replaced by *penetrabit* 'penetrate,' the verb he uses here.

56 'Such a sign that' (*tale signum . . . ut*). Hugh of St Cher (on 2:35) 146r argued that based on some of the several interpretations he had offered on the first part of verse 35 (cf n55), the verse's clause beginning 'that thoughts out of many hearts' (RSV) describes the consequence of the 'sign' (*signum*) in verse 34, not that of the sword that will pierce Mary's heart; Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:35) says much the same. In the paraphrase Erasmus had preserved the word *signum* in his elaboration of verse 34 just above ('a sign, the like of which') and resumes it here in *tale signum*. Hence he is marking the mention of the sword piercing Mary's heart as a parenthetical insertion, as modern texts do. The alternative interpretation, that a sword will pierce her *in order that* hidden thoughts would be revealed, is also mentioned by Hugh.

57 'The facts . . . plain' is *res ipsa declararet*, a variation of *Adagia* III iv 49 *Res indicabit* 'The facts will show.'

of righteousness among mortals were far from true righteousness; those who claimed the teaching of godliness as theirs by right will be unmasked as godless. On the other hand, those who earlier were considered strangers to religion will be shown to be much nearer to true religion; the simple faith of those who seemed rejected and decried will admit them first into the kingdom of heaven. The scribes and Pharisees always have "Messiah" in their mouths, "the Law" in their mouths, "righteousness" in their mouths; they are often busy in the temple, they pray at great length, they fast frequently, they walk about conspicuous in their broad phylacteries. But they hide something in their hearts far different from what they parade in their appearance. The risen light of gospel truth shall show up their deceitful and godless thoughts. Tax collectors, prostitutes, and sinners are banished from the sacred rites by these hypocrites of religion, but God shall welcome such people into the kingdom of heaven first of all. Nations once devoted to idolatry, their lives suddenly altered, shall embrace the teaching of true godliness in eager enthusiasm. Pharisees and priests, in whose possession was the pinnacle of Law and religion, shall persecute the author of the Law and oppose true religion in stubborn efforts. Night offers no sure judgment, and often instead of real objects casts shadows and empty representations of objects before our eyes. The risen sun scatters all illusions and restores the true appearance, the true character, to everything.' That godly old man, his heart inspired by divinity, poured out these words in joy.[58]

At this point the Lord Jesus had received testimony from angels, from the Virgin, from her chaste spouse; from the priest Zechariah, from his unborn infant John, from his wife Elizabeth; from shepherds, from wise men; from scribes reporting from the prophets where the Christ would be born, from Herod in fear for himself; from Simeon, who was neither priest nor Levite but nothing if not righteous.[59] It only remained for him to obtain the

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58 'In joy' is *gaudens* in *1535*; *gaudens ac gestiens* 'in joy and gladness' in *1523, 1524, 1534*.
Erasmus has made Simeon summarize the kinds of opposition and support that Luke will narrate in the course of this Gospel; see eg 11:39–43 (with Matt 23:2–36) and 18:10–12 for typical attitudes and behaviour of Pharisees. The style of the triple repetition of 'in their mouths' goes back to Jer 7:4 and is paralleled in the paraphrase on John 5:43 CWE 46 73. The contrast between darkness and light is ubiquitous in the prophets and Psalms; in addition to the places cited in n51 above, cf eg Pss 107:10–14, 112:4.

59 The assertion of Simeon's nonpriestly status was disputed by Noël Béda, who seems to have claimed that Luke definitely did not want any such assertion made. Erasmus replied in the *Supputatio* prop 55 (on 2:36) LB IX 606C–F that

witness of a widow too. So great was the power of an infant not yet showing his rightful strength that through the divine Spirit he seized on everything, inspiring the humble, disturbing and terrifying the proud, so that the conclusion could easily be drawn from these preliminaries what a transformation of things there would be as soon as he grew up and poured forth that heavenly voice in public, when he became famous for miracles, when he died and rose again, when he poured out the Holy Spirit from heaven lavishly on all believers. And so an elderly widow came after the aged bachelor.[60] She was one Anna, having her name from the fact, that is, from grace (as being endowed with a prophetic spirit), the daughter of Phanuel, a praiseworthy man from the tribe of Asher, which, being the eighth among the twelve tribes, represents in a silent image the blessedness of the resurrection, which the gospel teaching adds to the sabbath keeping of the Jews. For Asher in Hebrew means 'blessed.'[61] Since she was very advanced in age, she seemed to have been preserved for no other purpose than to see in her last years what she had wished for in fervent prayers: the promised babe who was going to bring salvation to the people of Israel. For the Holy Spirit had suggested to her that he had now been born. And at the prompting of the same Spirit with which Simeon had been inspired, she arrived when the events we have described were taking place in the temple. She had lived seven years from her virginity with a husband, since among the Jews virginity was not yet a reason for

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on the general authority of old writers about the classes of people welcomed to salvation (see the next note) and the specific claim of Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 728D–729B he deduced that Simeon represented the class of aged righteous laymen. Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:25) makes Simeon a priest but for a reason that, Erasmus says, is frivolous. The dispute also provoked a long comment in Erasmus' annotation *et ecce homo erat* (on 2:25) in *1527*.

60 'Bachelor' is *coelibi*. *Coelebs* means 'celibate' whether once married or not; the classical word (often spelled *caelebs*) is used of males only, so Erasmus' purpose here is to establish a parity in the chaste lives of the old man and the old woman. The *Catena aurea* (on 2:36) quotes Gregory of Nyssa on parallels between the two elders.

61 The definitions of 'Anna' and 'Asher' (Latin *Aser*) are found in Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 139 and elsewhere in that work. They are repeated by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 347C, the marginal *Gloss* (on 2:36), and, for Anna, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 2:36), Hugh of St Cher (on 2:36) 146r, and the *Catena aurea* (on 2:36). For the significance of Asher's eighth position among the sons of Jacob, see chapter 1 n25, a point mentioned on this verse by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 347D.

glory.[62] This period of time was given over to husband and offspring. But what remained of her lifetime was dedicated to godliness. For she had continued in widowhood for about eighty-four years. Having experienced marriage once, though she was still youthful, she did not think about looking for a second marriage; but as if dead to the world and already dedicated to God, she did not leave the temple, regularly sacrificing to him gospel sacrifices, offering to the Lord not only by day but by night her whole self, a living, reasonable, and acceptable sacrifice.[63] For she made her body a sacrifice in frequent fasts and offered her soul in devout prayers and supplications.[64]

So while the rites of purification were being carried out in the temple, while Simeon was prophesying, while sounds of holy good wishes filled the air, this woman too arrived at just the right time to be herself a witness[65] of the child who had been born and to link the feelings of her own breast with the joys of the others, proclaiming with praise the divine loving-kindness that had regard for God's people. Nor did she keep quiet among others about what she had seen with her own eyes and learned by inspiration, but she spoke about the child to all those waiting in Jerusalem for the redemption of the nation of Israel.[66] It was enough for the widow only to declare in the temple that the Christ had come and to make this known to a few seekers.[67]

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62 Cf Erasmus' comment on Jewish ignorance of virginity and elected barrenness in the paraphrase on 1:7, 28.

63 'Her whole self . . . sacrifice' echoes Rom 12:1.

64 'Supplications' (*obsecrationibus*). Though LB VII 304D here says 'another edition' has *observationibus* 'observances,' the four lifetime texts compared for this translation all read *obsecrationibus*, which is the word in the Vulgate text of 2:37.

65 In an annotation *confitebatur Domino* (on 2:36) Erasmus had explained that ἀνθομολογεῖσθαι, the Greek verb in 'confessed to the Lord' (DV), does not mean simply 'confess' (or 'profess') but 'reply in confessing' (or 'professing'), so that it refers to the professions made by Simeon and the other witnesses. He elaborates that idea in the paraphrase here, making Anna speak in terms already familiar from the words of the others.

66 In the annotation *redemptionem Israel* (on 2:38) Erasmus had said that the Greek texts read not 'Israel' with 'redemption' but 'in Jerusalem' or 'of Jerusalem.' He accommodates both expressions in the paraphrase.

67 'A few seekers' *paucis avidis* is the reading in all the lifetime texts used in this translation, though LB VII 304E records it only as an alternative to the reading *pacis avidis* 'those eager for peace.' Anna's prophecy is not actually quoted by Luke, a fact remarked on by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 17 PL 26 276B, who implies that her gender is the reason (cf 1 Cor 14:34, 1 Tim 2:11–12); similarly the *Gloss* (on 2:38). These views may have influenced how Erasmus limits Anna's audience, or he may be making deductions from her way of life described in the Gospel text.

For the time had not yet come that was set apart for apostles filled with the heavenly Spirit, of whom it was said, 'Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.'[68]

At last, with everything properly carried out that the Law had prescribed for purification, they returned to Nazareth, where the child had been conceived.[69] But King Herod, alerted by the wise men that a new king, of Israelite race, had been born, had ordered all infants who had been born within the last two years in Bethlehem and the whole surrounding territory to be killed. So, warned by an angel as he slept, Joseph took the baby and his mother away into Egypt, and there they stayed until the death of the godless king. Then, again at the prompting of an angel, they returned – not to Bethlehem, so as not to give an opportunity for savagery to Herod's son,[70] who had succeeded his father in part of the kingdom, but to Galilee, to the city of Nazareth, where the child had been conceived. For he wanted to lie low for the time being; and by living in Nazareth he could easily escape the cruelty of those who feared the appearance of a new king. So up to this point that heavenly Prince of ours, who had lowered himself for our sake to the level of swaddling bands, cradle, crying, and a helpless infant's body, was proclaimed by the witness of voices not his own.

But gradually his increasing age brought size and strength to his body, in which, as in a dwelling place, an amazing quality shone out, displaying

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68 Rom 10:18, quoting Ps 19:4

69 In *1523* and *1524* the text had read 'returned to Bethlehem, where the child had been born.' The mistake appeared among Béda's criticisms, and Erasmus made a quite defensive reply in the *Supputatio* prop 56 LB IX 606F–607B, pointing out that it was an obvious slip that presented no spiritual danger to the reader, of the kind made by scribes, printers, and authors; that he knew better, he said, is made clear by the beginning of the paraphrase on chapter 2 and by the fact that here he reports correctly that Nazareth was the destination of the Holy Family on their return from Egypt. He made a second reply in *Declarationes* CWE 82 159–60. The slip was corrected in *1534*.

70 'Herod's son' is perhaps Archelaus, depending on which Herod was ruling at the time of of Jesus' birth and the dating of that birth. See Fitzmyer AB Luke 399–405; the *Oxford Companion to the Bible* ed Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (New York 1993) at 'Herodian Dynasty,' with the passages in Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* (Erasmus' probable source for such data) cited in those two works.

Reference to the slaughter of the innocents and the flight into Egypt does not appear in Luke but in Matt 2:13–23. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 347D–348A points out that Luke omits this account, knowing that interested persons would find it in Matthew; he is echoed by the *Gloss* (on 2:39) and the *Catena aurea* (on 2:39).

something more than human. His strength of spirit grew also, day by day showing itself more fully in his face, carriage, speech, actions: in them everything breathed modesty, chastity, sweet temper, godliness.[71] For he was not subject to the faults under which that time of life usually labours: silliness, playfulness, fickleness, foolishness. Instead, the divine wisdom with which he was filled showed itself already then, not in the expected years, so that he who had earlier been recommended by the testimony of others was now rendered both admirable and lovable to everyone. Wisdom, holiness, integrity, maturity such as you would find in no old man made him admirable. Then the sweetness of his character, his friendliness, his modesty made him lovable to all. It was no ordinary or temporary popularity, which that age sometimes garners for itself through human endowments, such as a pleasing appearance or precocious aptitude for learning, but in him a divine and wonderful grace shone forth, drawing everyone to the love of virtue.[72]

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71 The sentence describing the 'strength of spirit' of the boy Jesus depends on a reading in the Greek manuscripts known to Valla *Annot in Lucam* and to Erasmus, cited in the annotation *et confortabatur* (on 2:40), that includes πνεύματι 'spirit' in this verse, a word not read in modern texts. Cf 1:80 and Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 505D–508C.
'Face' is *vultu* in the lifetime editions; LB VII 305A reads *cultu* 'manner of life' or 'of mind,' or 'external appearance,' with a note that 'another edition' has *vultu*.

72 The exegetical tradition notes in one way or another that while from the time of his birth Jesus already possessed all the qualities of God, his human form evinced them gradually, though in a more than human way, in so far as they emerged much earlier than in ordinary people. See Origen *Hom in Lucam* 18 and 19 PL 26 277B–278A and 279B–280A, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 505D–508C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 348A, the *Gloss* (on 2:40) citing Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 732D, the *Catena aurea* (on 2:40) citing Cyril and Bede. Hugh of St Cher (on 2:40) and the *Catena aurea* passage, however, speak more specifically about the marvellous nature of Jesus' boyhood indicated in this verse and the following account from his early adolescence. Hugh points to the boy's qualities of purity of life, humility, prompt obedience, and servitude in ministry; the *Catena aurea* speaks of his boyhood demonstrating marvellous qualities just as his infancy had. Such observations seem to have influenced Erasmus' expansion here, in addition to his well-known interest in children and the right way to foster their moral and intellectual growth. See eg his homily *De puero Iesu* (1511) CWE 29 56–70; the *Formulae* (1518), the early version of what became the *Colloquia* CWE 39 6–34; and the later pieces *De pueris instituendis* (1529) CWE 26 297–346 and *De civilitate* (1530) CWE 25 273–89, with the editorial introductions in CWE to both these latter works. Erasmus clearly rejects the invention of tales about the early life of Jesus and other holy persons (cf his remarks in chapter 1 18–19 and the opening of his life of Jerome CWE 61 19–23). One example of such tales about Jesus is the noncanonical 'Infancy Gospel of Thomas' in Ehrman

Now though Nazareth was rather far from Jerusalem, Jesus' devout parents still went there every year, specifically for the feast of the Passover, a day that was kept very devoutly by the Jews and was the one on which, in due time, that Lamb innocent of any spot had been destined to be offered in sacrifice.[73] The boy, then, under the guidance of his mother and foster father was becoming familiar with religious observance as an example for us, reminding all parents of their duty, for it is incumbent on them promptly, and, as the saying goes, from the cradle up,[74] to protect their offspring from all irresponsible behaviour. Instead, they must accustom them to holy ways and the study of true godliness while they are still of tender years, while the mind is still malleable and inclined to follow all training in virtue. The boy Jesus had no need of another's instruction; but the model of chaste upbringing was provided for other parents, and an outline was displayed for all children of how they should be obedient to their parents when the parents are urging them to holy ways.[75]

Thus as childhood grew sturdier with the addition of years and neared adolescence,[76] when he was twelve years old, his parents had made their customary journey to Jerusalem accompanied by their boy. After everything

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Lost Scriptures (chapter 1 n79) 57–62. Still, he is able here and below to describe Jesus' qualities in his growing years as not unlike those illustrated by the narratives in the 'Infancy Gospel,' at least the less mischievous ones.

73 There are numerous references in the NT to Jesus understood as the paschal lamb: John 1:29 and 36, Acts 8:32, 1 Pet 1:19, and Revelation passim.

74 'Foster father' is *nutritius*. See n52 on the use of this term for Joseph, though Erasmus is not reluctant to use simply *pater* 'father' for Joseph and *parentes* 'parents,' as does the Gospel text in this account and elsewhere.
'As the saying goes, from the cradle up' (*ab ipsis ut aiunt incunabulis*) is a version of *Adagia* I vii 53; the form Erasmus uses here, with the emphatic *ipsis* 'very, itself' (accommodated in this translation by the adverb 'up') is one that Jerome also uses, in his preface to the book of Job, PL 28 1082B or the Vulgate (Weber-Fischer) 732.

75 Hugh of St Cher (on 2:40) 146v comments that this next episode, besides serving as a transition from the infancy narrative to the subsequent account of Jesus' adult ministry, has three moral lessons: that we are to attend church from an early age and focus on praising God, that we are to put spiritual things before temporal ones, and that we should celebrate the festal days by church attendance. Erasmus also has a moral lesson but one redirected to parents; cf his other works cited in n72.

76 'Adolescence' is *ephebia*, a Latinized Greek term found in late Latin; Erasmus may well have borrowed it from the commentary of the grammarian Donatus on Terence *Andria* 51, Terence being one of his favourite authors. The word defines the period that begins with puberty; see *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (chapter 1 n15) at *epheboi*.

concerning the observance of that festival had been completed and the days when attention was paid to religious matters were over, Joseph and his mother turned towards home. But young Jesus stayed in Jerusalem, already eager to carry out the instructions of his Father, for which he had been sent into the world.

His parents were unaware of that fact. Indeed, when Jesus did not come back to Nazareth, they wondered, with the ordinary anxiousness of any parents, what had happened. But they suspected that he had gotten stuck in the company of his kinsmen and children of his own age, and was coming more slowly. So they retraced their route for about a day's journey, looking for him among friends and relations, for that age sometimes likes to linger among such folk, the affection of their relatives slowing them down.[77]

But Jesus was not to be found there, for even then he taught that one who wishes to take up the proclamation of heavenly teaching must renounce the affections of parents and kin.[78] So, their expectation thwarted here, since worry was tormenting their parental feelings even more, they went back to Jerusalem, thinking that perhaps he had stayed there with a friend or acquaintance.

But here too the boy was sought in vain among friends and kinfolk. After three days his parents unexpectedly found him in the temple, not wasting time or playing games[79] but sitting in the midst of the doctors, to whom the boy was alternately listening as they taught and asking them questions, and in turn was being questioned and giving answers – not that he had a need to find out from mortals what he was learning, but so that by thoughtfully asking questions he might teach those who professed knowledge of the Law, though they were ignorant of the meaning of the Law. At the same time he was firing us up to an eagerness to learn and teaching that no time of life is too soon or too late to learn the things that make for godliness. For there are skills that are not suited to being learned at any and all ages; godliness alone should be learned at the beginning of life, and the study of it never given up

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77 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 349A–B explains that on such mass journeys as the Passover trip the men would travel as a group and the women as a group; the children could go with either parent. So each of Jesus' parents thought he was with the other one. This explanation was repeated by the *Gloss* (on 2:43), Hugh of St Cher (on 2:43, citing Zec 12:13–14) 147v, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:43). Erasmus ignores it in favour of an explanation that has more to do with the increasing sense of independence among adolescents.

78 Cf 9:23 and its paraphrase, 255, and 14:26 with its paraphrase CWE 48 67, along with Matt 16:24 and its paraphrase CWE 25 249.

79 Similar discarded alternatives are found in Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:46): 'not in the theatre or the marketplace or at a game, as boys are usually found.'

till life's last day; for as long as you live, there is some measure in which you can make progress.[80]

Now though Jesus was not known to the doctors and the bystanders, he still caused them all to wonder at him because so young a boy displayed in his comments and questions a marvellous and more than mature wisdom. They saw a physical age weak and not yet ripe for wisdom, and they heard a boy of remarkable modesty producing things that doctors advanced in years and already apparently masters of the height of wisdom were not embarrassed to learn. Yet at the same time there was an absence of arrogance, of impudence, of boastfulness, faults that are usually present in boys of precocious intellect. He asked questions like one eager to learn and when he was questioned, replied quite modestly and also quite thoughtfully. In this way it came about that both the doctors with whom he was having the discussion and those who surrounded them observing the exchange were very much astonished, not just because of the boy's unusual wisdom, which he displayed in asking and answering, but also because of the rare modesty of expression and gesture, and of language, all of which added grace to his intelligence.[81]

Nor is even this episode at all lacking for a useful hidden meaning. For he who could not be found among acquaintances and kinsmen according to the flesh was discovered at Jerusalem in the temple. Indeed, that city, famous for its reputation of religiosity, was an image of the church either militant on earth or triumphant in heaven. For that is our homeland for which we long, understanding that here we are in exile, having no lasting city. For wherever it is a question of human affections, wherever passion is spent on the things that perish with this world, neither is Jerusalem (which means in Hebrew 'vision of peace') there, nor a temple sacred to the Lord.[82] Hence

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80 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 349B–C notes that the boy Jesus' humble behaviour in asking questions and responding to questions put to him was intended to be a model for young learners and old learners alike, since whether Jesus asked or answered questions, he was instructing his hearers; Bede is followed by the *Gloss* (on 2:46). Paraphrasing verse 52, Erasmus will take up the theme of lifelong learning in godliness below, 100.

81 'A Greek' quoted in the *Catena aurea* (on 2:49) gives a detailed description of the boy Jesus' intellectual and personal qualities, including his easy manners and skill in speaking and reasoning.

82 'Jerusalem' means 'vision of peace' according to Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 136 and 154. For Jerusalem as a symbol of the church cf eg Heb 12:22, Rev 3:12 and 21:2 and 10. For Christian life on earth as one of exile, cf Heb 11:13–16 and 13:14.

Jesus, who is entirely heavenly, is not to be found there either. But wherever there is a breast that disregards things of flesh and blood, and pants for the blessed heart's peace that the loving-kindness of God offers here through faith in the gospel and makes perfect in the heavenly Jerusalem: that is where Jerusalem is, that is where the temple is in which Jesus takes delight. There the alternating questions and answers are not about squaring the circle, not about primal matter or primal motion, ignorance of which carries no threat to our salvation, but about knowledge of Sacred Scripture, through which God shows us the path by which we may obtain eternal salvation.[83] In that place the victims most pleasing to God are sacrificed: lust, envy, anger, ambition, greed; there in pious prayers and pure supplications the incense most pleasing to the Lord is kindled. So each and every person must take care to have Jerusalem in his heart, to prepare there a temple fit for the Holy Spirit, where he may be found worthy to have Jesus as his guest.[84]

And see now, while in these elementary steps that marvellous boy is rehearsing for carrying out the heavenly business of restoring human salvation – the reason that he had come down from heaven – his father and mother arrive, to whom the mystery of the divine purpose was not yet fully known. Something of human feelings had already subsided in them, though they had come looking for the boy out of devoted concern.[85] Joseph kept quiet, aware that he had no right over his wife's child; the mother by virtue of her authority demanded, 'Son, why are you treating us this way? Why did you

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83 The contrast between secular knowledge of mathematics and natural philosophy and scriptural knowledge here is comparable to the contrast between secular history and salvation history in the paraphrase on the prologue to this Gospel, 17.

84 For sacrifices that are pleasing to God, see eg Pss 24:3–6 and 51:15–17. For prayer as incense, eg Ps 140:2, Rev 8:3; for the temple of the Holy Spirit, 1 Cor 6:19 and the paraphrase on that verse CWE 43 85. For Jesus as guest, cf 5:29–30, 10:38–42, 19:1–10, Matt 9:9–13, Mark 2:13–15, John 12:1–3, and also Luke 24:28–31 with the paraphrase on those verses CWE 48 270–2.

85 Origen *Hom in Lucam* 19 PL 26 280B–D and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 733B–D suggest that Joseph and Mary know enough from the prophecies about Jesus' future not to be overly alarmed but still to have a reasonable level of parental anxiety at his absence. Erasmus cites the latter in defence of his own uncertainty about how much Mary knew about her son's divine nature at this point, *Supputatio* prop 57 LB IX 607B–E. Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:48) says that Joseph, knowing that Jesus was the Son of God, did not dare to scold him; see Erasmus' next sentence and the further remarks on the parents' incomplete knowledge in 2:50 with its paraphrase, 97.

slip away from us secretly? See, your father and I have been looking anxiously for you for some days now, fearing for you all the kinds of things that parental devotion generally fears for beloved children!'[86]

To these words of Mary's, coming from her certainly devoted but human affection, which did not call for the divine activity that was then in progress to be interrupted, Jesus replied a trifle harshly – not that he was annoyed with his parents but in order to demonstrate that in the gospel business for which he had been sent by his heavenly Father there could be no place for any human authority. Parental authority has its limits, and it must be broken off when the business of eternal salvation is under way. For it is right that human affairs give way to divine; and that the plan of God, to whom we owe both body and soul, and by whose loving-kindness we look for our inheritance of immortal life, come before the plan of those by whom we were born and brought up according to the flesh only to succeed to some share of earthly possessions.[87] We owe them a great deal, surely, but we owe much more to God, to whom we owe even our parents themselves. Similarly, later too he answered his mother less than politely when she addressed him about the wine at the wedding and by maternal authority required a miracle of him, which was supposed to be delivered only for the glory of his Father. Likewise, he replied even more harshly to those who called him away from preaching the gospel in the name of his mother and relatives. Hence to his mother rebuking him in these words[88] he replied as follows: 'What reason

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86 In the passage of the *Supputatio* cited in the previous note Erasmus replies to Béda's objection to this sentence as blasphemous regarding Mary and Joseph's (or at any rate Mary's) foreknowledge of Jesus' divine nature and hence her level of concern. In addition to Theophylact Erasmus also invokes Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1657B–C, who says that Mary is reproved here because she still demands 'human things' of her son, but she will know more and require a miracle of him at the wedding at Cana (John 2:1–11). See the next paragraph. The *Catena aurea* (on 2:48) cites 'a Greek' as commending Mary's motherly behaviour: trusting, humble, and affectionate.

87 Hugh of St Cher (on 2:44) 147v says that Jesus here taught that spiritual matters must take precedence over temporal ones; the *Catena aurea* (on 2:49) quotes 'a Greek' commenting on Jesus' advice here to abandon blood ties in the pursuit of spiritual perfection. In the following sentences Erasmus proceeds to other examples of Jesus putting obligations to kin in second place: the wedding at Cana, as Ambrose had said (see the previous note); and later in this and the other synoptic Gospels, when he dismisses an interruption by his mother and 'brothers,' 8:19–21, Matt 12:48–50, Mark 3:31–5. See the paraphrase on 8:19–21.

88 'In these words' is *his* in *1535* and LB; missing in *1523* and *1524*; *hic* 'at this point' in *1534*.

was there for you to worry and look for me so anxiously? Did you not remember that I must be about my Father's business whenever he calls me to my appointed task?'

His parents did not sufficiently understand what this speech of Jesus' meant. For he displayed something more than human, especially at such a tender age. Though from what had preceded they were expecting nothing common or ordinary from the boy, they still did not yet fully understand the sublimity of his divine power, they did not yet know how God in his wonderful design had decided to redeem the human race through his Son. They heard the name 'father,' though they knew he had no father on earth; they heard 'my Father's business,' about which he had not yet made any mention to them. Nonetheless his parents stayed silent and respected the words they did not understand.[89]

Observing this, Jesus humbled himself[90] and was submissive to his mother and his foster father Joseph – not that he owed them obedience in the business of the gospel,[91] but out of his own goodness he yielded for the

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89 In a *1519* annotation *et ipsi non intellexerunt verbum* (on 2:50), much enlarged after *1522*, Erasmus had made two important points: first, that this verse renders implausible the view of some who more enthusiastically than carefully credit Mary with complete understanding of who and what Jesus was from the very beginning, for the Evangelist himself says that Jesus' plain words were not understood by his parents; second, that the tone of Jesus' reply when he was scolded was not conciliatory but almost scolding itself, as Ambrose had already pointed out (cf n86). Erasmus in the paraphrase above had described Jesus as replying 'a trifle harshly' (*subdure*).

90 'Humbled himself' is *demisit sese*, paraphrasing *descendit* 'went down' in the Vulgate text. *Descendit* could easily be understood as simply denotative of the journey 'down' from Jerusalem; so DV, AV, and later translations. Hugh of St Cher (on 2:51) 147v notes that besides the denotative meaning a mystical interpretation is also possible, because the mode of humbling oneself is described by words meaning 'descent' or 'lowering.' Similarly Erasmus delays reporting the actual move of the Holy Family from Jerusalem back to Nazareth and instead discusses Jesus' humbling himself as an opportunity for his followers to identify with his human nature.

91 'In the business of the gospel' was added in *1534*, almost certainly in response to Noël Béda's objection to this sentence in its original form; cf n89 and *Elenchus in censuras Bedae* nos 58 and 59 LB IX 499A–B, *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 492C–D, and *Supputatio* prop 58 and 59 LB IX 607E–610A. Another probable result was a *1527* annotation *et erat subditus illis* (on 2:51), which argued against those who claimed that Mary could, even in heaven, use her maternal authority to command obedience from her resurrected Son; Erasmus protests, for instance, such an interpretation of the lines 'Show you are his mother, let him accept a prayer through you,' from the fourth stanza of the hymn *Ave maris*

time being to their weakness. At the same time he provided a model and example to all children of how eagerly and respectfully they should obey their parents, since the child Jesus, who owed obedience to none but his heavenly Father, was so yielding to the man acting as his father and to the mother who had borne him without suffering the injury of violated chastity.[92]

Thus it seemed best to the Lord Jesus to govern all his words and deeds so as on occasion to let out some flashes, as it were, of his divine power and then again to lower himself to a human humbleness. This of course was to our benefit, so that in every way humankind might be persuaded that the reality of his divine and his human natures was joined in a single person. His fellowship in our nature made for winning our love. We love more passionately and happily what is related and familiar to us, according to the old proverb, when they say, 'Like always attaches itself to like.'[93] But we trust in God more securely, for since he is incapable of lying and there is nothing he cannot accomplish, there can be no doubt but that he will fulfil whatever he promises. And love does indeed start from a kinship in type, but from these beginnings it progresses to love of higher things. For ordinarily people are warmed to friendly feeling from seeing bodily beauty; soon, when from daily association and conversation the endowments of a yet more beautiful mind have been observed hidden in the beautiful body, they begin to love what they do not see more truly and more ardently than what they see.[94] Just so, his sharing our human nature was a kind of enticement for us to form a love for our Lord Jesus, but from that point we progress towards love of his divine nature. Hence whether he lowers himself to our weakness or raises himself to his own sublimity, he is doing the work of our salvation.

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stella 'Hail, Star of the Sea,' which he said could be taken to mean 'Instruct your Son to hear us.'

92 That the boy Jesus models for children and inferiors obedient behaviour to parents and superiors is noted by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 20 PL 26 282C–283A, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1658A–B, Augustine *Sermones de scripturis* 51 PL 38 343, the *Gloss* (on 2:51), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 733D, the *Catena aurea* quoting 'a Greek' (on 2:51), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:51). Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 350B remarks on this passage that the boy Jesus defers to *simulato patri* 'the man acting as his father' (the same phrase Erasmus uses) and says 'the boy at birth had kept his mother a virgin and chaste.'

93 *Simile semper adiungi simili*, a proverb of which there are many variations; cf *Adagia* I ii 20–2.

94 A statement reminiscent of what Socrates learns from the priestess Diotima about how love leads from the particular and physical to the general and invisible in Plato *Symposium* 209e5–212a7

So Jesus left the temple and Jerusalem and, minding his parents, returned to Nazareth. Let children and young people blush who pay no attention to their parents' admonitions calling them to good behaviour, whereas Jesus temporarily left his Father's business aside so as not to present the appearance of a disobedient son. Let layfolk rebelling against their bishops, that is, their spiritual fathers, blush, whereas Jesus, the superior, was obedient to his inferiors, obedient, God though he was, to human beings.[95] Yet his mother in turn was obedient to her son, sensing that a kind of divine power was flashing forth in him, and mindful of her own prudent reserve still did no blabbing in the female fashion and had nothing to say about these things, which she found more amazing than comprehensible. Rather, whatever had happened concerning the boy from the start, whatever he said or did, she gathered up and stored in her breast, guessing about the outcome from the amazing beginnings; and she let nothing go by unnoticed, so that later she could more credibly relate everything to the disciples, who were going to preach the life of Jesus throughout the whole world.[96]

Meanwhile Jesus, so far known to only a few, stayed in the town of Nazareth, living apparently under his parents' control until the time set by his Father should come, when he would present himself to the world in miracles and preaching. Meanwhile he reminded us by his example that no one should rush to the gospel task heedlessly and hastily before he has gathered authority from increase of years, irreproachable morals, sacred learning, and a divine call to teach. For Jesus did nothing particularly noteworthy until about his thirtieth year,[97] except that in a manner more than human, as he progressed in physical stature, strength, and years, that heavenly wisdom and the rest of his divine gifts likewise evidenced themselves more abundantly in him; and as in those things he was completely pleasing to God, so

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95 Cf n92.

96 'More credibly' is *maiore cum fide*; cf chapter 1 n1. That Mary's role in the transmission of the gospel was one of providing sound information about events of which disciples and evangelists could have no direct knowledge is implied by the paraphrase on 1:2, chapter 1 20 with n11; it is an easy deduction from Mary's presence among the postresurrection followers of Jesus recorded in Acts 1:13–14. Such a role for Mary is described in a letter beginning *cogitis me O Paula et Eustochium* falsely ascribed to Jerome, PL 30 124D. Erasmus rejected this letter as genuinely Jerome's (CWE 61 74), but the tradition of Mary's eyewitness information, either from the natural deduction or from the letter, also appears in the *Gloss* (on 2:51) and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:19, a passage to which he refers in commenting on 2:51).

97 Cf 3:23 and the paraphrase on it, 118.

every day he was more and more pleasing to mortals – being of course unlike the scribes and Pharisees, who made themselves pleasing to human eyes by a false appearance of holiness and wisdom, though in the eyes of God they were teeming with all the filth of sins.[98] And it contributed to not only the salvation of the human race, in a novel and unheard-of plan of redemption, but also the formation of our life, that Jesus, gradually and by particular stages, brought his divine gifts (with which he was full) to the knowledge of humankind, to teach us, from those first elements of righteousness, how we must drink deeply right from infancy itself and must in unending progress press on to more perfect things. For just as the body has its stages of growth up to its rightful limit of stature and its rightful strength – proceeding from infancy to adolescence, from adolescence to young manhood, from young manhood to maturity – so godliness too has its stages, until we grow up to the perfect vigour of the fullness of Christ.[99] For Christ grows larger and matures in us when we advance from the ABCs of faith to the deeper wisdom of divine Scripture, when we leave aside the milk of the flesh and seek for the solid food of the spirit, when we leave aside the tasteless literal sense and thirst for the mystical meaning, when we leave behind earthly things and fly away to things heavenly. For it is preposterous for our body always to

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98 In the annotation *et Jesus proficiebat, etc* (on 2:52) Erasmus expressed his agreement with the traditional view that Jesus did not receive additional endowments in his growing-up years but revealed in stages the gifts he had had, as God, from his conception. Still, he said, he was not inclined to dispute those who feel that Jesus did acquire gifts in one way by inspiration and in another way by human practice and study; certainly Jesus appeared to progress in gifts as he progressed in age, and in any case the point is what Luke meant, not what scholastic theologians decide. Much the same position is held by the *Gloss* (on 2:52) and Nicholas of Lyra (on 2:52), who takes note of the diversity of views.
The annotation added that ἡλικία, the Greek word translated as *gratia* 'grace' in the Vulgate of 2:52, is the same word that in 19:3 and Matt 6:27 is translated as *statura* 'stature.' The paraphrase here uses *statura* and otherwise puts stress on Jesus' physical growth and his evolving demonstration (not growth) of divine gifts. Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 509B–D is one example of this latter view; Hugh of St Cher (on 2:52 *mystice*) is another, who also observes that learning what needs to be learned is as appropriate to old age as to the younger years, citing Augustine.

99 'Perfect vigour of the fullness of Christ' (*perfectam firmitatem plenitudinis Christi*) is an echo of Eph 4:13 *in virum perfectum in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi* 'a mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (RSV). For the mention of milk and solid food in the next sentence, cf 1 Cor 3:2 and Heb 5:13–14. The *Catena aurea* (on 2:52) quotes Gregory of Nyssa on the stages – infant, adult, and perfected – of spiritual growth in believers.

improve in the course of nature and our soul, by our own indolence, to slip backwards and decline. For we see that happen commonly. Adolescents degenerate from the purity of childhood into impudence, young men progress to quarrels and fist fights, grown men to ambition and greed. And so it happens that the closer anyone comes to mature age, the further he retreats from innocence. But those who have once put on Jesus Christ[100] ought always, on his model, strive for improvement, so that they may both commend themselves to the eyes of God by their purity of spirit and by their uprightness of life get themselves an honourable reputation among humankind.

Chapter 3

There you have, my excellent Theophilus, the beginnings in which John the forerunner and the Lord Jesus rehearsed for the task of preaching the gospel. Now hear with what method and what success they approached the matter, so that you will understand how nothing at all was done by chance or human intelligence, but everything happened by divine providence directing its business through novel means. For the time was now coming when the heavenly kingdom would advance and the earthly kingdom shrink; spiritual priesthood would come forth and the shadow of a priesthood, on which the Jews had prided themselves to that very time, would fade away.

By now Augustus Caesar, at whose decree the registration of all the world had been made and in whose reign Jesus Christ was born, had died. The godless Herod, who had searched for the infant to kill him, had passed away; and Herod's son Archelaus had been sent into exile for practices all too like his father's. Tiberius Caesar had succeeded Augustus. When he was in the fifteenth year of his reign, Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea.[1] By Caesar's appointment Archelaus' brother Herod had been allotted Galilee. Philip had taken over the administration of the part of Syria called Iturea and Trachonitis (so called from the harshness of its mountains);[2] it extends from Mount Lebanon and the mountains of Idumaea to the western

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100 Cf Rom 13:14 and Gal 3:27 for the metaphor of putting on, or clothing oneself in, Christ.

1 In an annotation *procurante Pontio* (on 3:1) Erasmus commented that the Vulgate translator had shown an unwarranted taste for variety of diction, saying *procurante* 'procurator' here to translate the same word for which he had earlier used *praeses* 'governor.' In the paraphrase Erasmus uses *praeses*. He will later defend this choice as not intending to make light of the Vulgate translator, *Apologia ad annotationes Stunicae* ASD IX-2 118:194–205.

2 'Trachonitis' is formed from the Greek adjective τραχύς 'jagged, rugged, harsh.'

part of Syria. Then Lysanias had been granted the territory called Abilene, which had gotten its name from the chief city of that region, Abila, but later Lysanias changed its name to Lysanion. For in order to break the strength of the kingdom, Augustus had divided it among the four brothers, Herod, Philip, Antipater, and Lysanias, who were therefore called tetrarchs, and the title of king was abolished.[3] This too was a sign of the pending demise of the Jewish kingdom according to prophecy.[4] But the most sacred part of Judea, where Jerusalem and the temple were, and where the Lord of all was born, was administered by the Roman Pilate, himself indicating by this fact that the gentiles would burst into the heavenly kingdom rejected by the Jews.[5] In

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3 The details of the Herodian succession were not always relayed accurately. In Erasmus' account here some of the inaccuracies appear, and he may have added some of his own. The first son of Herod the Great mentioned (by Erasmus but not by Luke) is Archelaus, whose initial appointment as political heir of Herod, along with his brothers Philip and Herod Antipas, was made by Augustus (who suspended the title of king) in AD 4; see Josephus *Jewish War* 2.95 and *Jewish Antiquities* 17.8.1, 9.7, 11.4. Augustus removed and exiled him, and reassigned his territory to Herod Antipas nine or ten years later (*Jewish War* 2.114–65, *Jewish Antiquities* 17.13.2, 18.1.1), at which time Quirinus was appointed governor; cf chapter 2 n3. Archelaus' part in the story is mentioned by Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 1 PL 26 29A–B, citing Josephus; it is repeated by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 351A–B, who is followed by the *Gloss* (on 3:1), Hugh of St Cher (on 3:1) 148v, the *Catena aurea* (on 3:1), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 3:1) also citing Josephus. But Bede identifies Lysanias as a son of Herod, something Josephus does not say; Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 736B implies the same, Hugh mentions doubts about Lysanias' status as son, and Nicholas rejects it outright. In Erasmus' list of 'four brothers' Antipater has no place either – there was no Herod Antipater surviving at that time. Erasmus may have been inclined to name four brothers by the etymology he gives here of the term 'tetrarchy.' It is plausible but by gospel times the word 'tetrarch' generally meant petty rulers ranking lower than kings; and 'tetrarchy' implied rather a division of parts of a kingdom, as Hugh had said; cf Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, et al *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford 1996) at τετραρχέω; L&S at *tetrarches*, *tetrarchia*. In the *1527* and *1535* annotation *tetrarcha autem* (on 3:1), Erasmus states his opinion that 'Antipater' was this Herod's cognomen; he makes no addition, however, in our *Paraphrase*. Cf also CWE 45 55 n32 and 61 n19.

4 Christian interpretation of OT prophecy has traditionally understood the prophetic warnings of destruction for the Israelites and their holy city as referring to the coming of Christ, the new priest and king, and the foundation of the church. Cf the paraphrases on the three Lucan canticles in chapters 1 and 2, 24, 51–7, 61–6, and 84–6; and the first part of the long paraphrase on 24:27 CWE 48 235–50.

5 Cf chapter 2 84 with n50 for the imagery of 'bursting into' heaven.

the same way the priesthood too, like something soon to cease, was passed freely from one to the next and was available for a price; its leadership at this time was in the hands of two notably godless men, Annas and Caiaphas.[6] Jewish affairs being thus divided and in disarray, a heavenly kingdom and a new priesthood arose, whose chosen herald was John the son of Zechariah.

Up to this point John had been in hiding among the wild beasts and had spent a life of unheard-of austerity. He wore camel's hair, with a rawhide belt, and lived on wild honey and locusts, not even touching wine or strong drink. He did this so that he could be a proper preacher of penitence and teach by his life first, before his words, and be free of all reproach, since he would be reproving the sins of others with considerable frankness.[7] Now, inspired and instructed by the Spirit of God, he emerged from his desert haunts and went not to the temple, the place assigned to Christ, but to the whole region bordering the river Jordan, so that a supply of water would be more conveniently available for those to be baptized.[8] And he preached that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, urging people to prepare themselves for the coming salvation by repenting of their earlier life and to make themselves fit, by the baptism of water that he as forerunner gave, for the baptism of the Spirit that would be given by the one whose arrival was near.[9]

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6 Erasmus had already asserted in the *Paraphrases* on Matthew and John that the Jewish high priesthood was for sale; see CWE 45 360 with n88; CWE 46 147 with n55. Josephus *Jewish Antiquities* 18.2.2 describes how Pilate's Roman predecessor in Judea had removed and replaced high priests in rapid succession, though Josephus does not suggest that money was the reason; the passage is quoted and commented on by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 351B–C, followed by the *Gloss* on 3:2. Hugh of St Cher (on 3:2) 148v and Nicholas of Lyra (on 3:2) say that the appointees bought the office by paying the Romans.

7 As noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1659A–B, followed by the *Gloss* (on 3:3) and the *Catena aurea* (on 3:2), Matt 3:1 and 4 and Mark 1:4 and 6 describe John's dress, food, and manner of life to make the point that he lived the life of a prophet; Luke simplifies by reporting just his prophetic activity. Erasmus introduces the concrete details, including the mention of wine and strong drink made by the angel in 1:15, and their personal and pedagogical function.

8 Origen *Hom in Lucam* 21 PL 26 285A–B, cited by the *Catena aurea* (on 3:3), points out the convenience of John's preaching close to a source of water for his baptizing.

9 The exegetical tradition represented by Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 20 PL 76 1160D–1161A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 352A, the *Gloss* (on 3:3), Hugh of St Cher (on 3:3) 148v, and the *Catena aurea* (on 3:3) explains that John baptized as a sign of repentance but did not, because he could not, forgive sins; however, he *preached* such forgiveness, which would come only with the incarnate Word. Erasmus follows this tradition, completely avoiding Luke's phrase 'baptism

All this was happening at that time by inspiration of the Spirit of God, who long before had foretold by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah that it would come to pass. For he speaks of John as follows: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, the Lord is coming. Prepare his ways and make his paths straight, lest, offended by your depraved habits, he recoil from you. He comes to all; he must be met by all. All things must be levelled. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill flattened. Those who held their heads high among humankind because of their reputation for justice or wisdom shall lay down all their pride so they may be vessels of divine justice and wisdom. Those who ranked low among humankind, scorned as nobodies and sinners, shall be suddenly raised to a share in the kingdom of heaven because of their obedience to the gospel. And things that were twisted and crooked[10] shall be quickly squared up with the gospel rule, and things that were rough with briars of faults and evil desires shall be turned into smooth, flat roads. For such are the minds through which the Lord loves to walk. In this way the world shall be turned upside down at his coming. Those who were in despair shall be raised to hope; those who trusted in themselves shall be irremediably rejected. Those once considered wise shall become foolish; those who were fools shall be endowed with heavenly wisdom. Those who were idolaters before shall become worshippers of the living God; those who appeared to be God worshippers shall be found to be idol worshippers. Those who once were slaves to lust will now embrace chastity. Those who earlier stole what belonged to others shall now give away their own belongings in generosity. So prepare yourselves for this renewal of all things. The Lord shall soon be here; and not only shall the Jews see him but with the eyes of faith all the nations of the whole world shall look upon their common author of salvation, through whom God offers happiness without price to all who in reverent believing, in rectifying their earlier life, welcome the Saviour when he comes.'[11]

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of repentance for the forgiveness of sins' and replacing it with a description of what John preached.

10 'Twisted and crooked' is *distorta pravaque*. In an annotation *prava in directa* (on 3:5) Erasmus had observed that *prava* here does not have one of its possible meanings 'evil,' but *distorta* 'twisted.' Here he uses both terms, allowing the ambivalence of 'crooked' also present in English.

11 Erasmus' treatment of Isa 40:3–5 paraphrastically expands from initial minor additions to Luke's text to full amplification of its metaphorical meaning by the end. His explication follows the exegetical tradition in interpreting the physical features and foretold changes as metaphors for moral and spiritual qualities. Cf Origen *Hom in Lucam* 22 PL 26 286C–288C, Gregory the Great *Hom in Lucam* 20

Isaiah had prophesied this so many generations back, and the event corresponded to the prophecy in every regard. Indeed, a huge crowd of people left their homes for John's preaching, declaring by the very fact[12] that whoever aspires to salvation must leave domestic cares behind; they swarmed to the bank of the Jordan to be baptized by him not because John offered remission of sins but because in these rehearsals he prepared human hearts for the coming salvation. A great part of healing, to be sure, is to recognize one's disease, and one who can face the cure is closer to health.[13] And the first step to repentance comes from fearing God, so that first comes fear of punishment from a just judge, and then comes love for his generous act of kindness.

Therefore John spoke out very plainly against the haughty Pharisees and scribes.[14] So far they had stayed fast in the footsteps of their ungodly ancestors, swelled up in the false conviction of their own righteousness, enemies of true religion, and, while disdaining other people, too pleased with themselves for the very reason that they traced their descent from Abraham, as if God values humans by their family lineage and not by the virtues of their soul. 'Brood of vipers,' he said, 'utterly vicious offspring of utterly vicious parents, where did you get the idea that God's vengeance is hanging over you if you don't repent in time? Who warned you to flee from God's imminent stern retribution, which will spare no age or race or condition? The remedy is offered to all who show themselves curable; but punishment equally awaits all without distinction who are unwilling to repent of their

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PL 76 1161B–D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 352C–D, the *Gloss* (on 3:4–6), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 737A–C, the *Catena aurea* (on 3:4–5), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 3:4–6), who offers this as an alternative to the Jewish interpretation that Isaiah refers to release from the Babylonian captivity.

12 'Declaring by the very fact' (*re ipsa loquens*), another variation on *Adagia* III iv 49. Cf chapter 2 n57.

13 'Health' is *saluti*, the same word translated as 'salvation' at the end of the previous sentence. For the metaphorical language of health and disease, present everywhere in the Christian tradition but especially noticeable in the voice of Erasmus' paraphrased Luke, cf Jane E. Phillips 'The Speaking Voice in Erasmus' *Paraphrase on Luke*' in *Holy Scripture Speaks: The Production and Reception of Erasmus' Paraphrases on the New Testament* ed Hilmar M. Pabel and Mark Vessey (Toronto 2002) 127–50, at 137–44.

14 For the specification here of Pharisees and scribes cf Matt 3:7, where Pharisees and Sadducees are mentioned, as is pointed out by Hugh of St Cher (on 3:7) 149r and Nicholas of Lyra (on 3:7), though the Latin tradition generally agrees that pride in descent from Abraham is being rebuked: Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1661A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 353A–B, and the *Gloss* (on 3:7).

former ways. Why hasn't love for God drawn you here, where fear of punishment is drawing you now?

'Your mind is not yet changed. If you really repent of your earlier life, then take up different ways and show by your very actions that you are reformed. So far, like wild trees you have yielded the bitter, poisonous fruits of evil deeds – pride, anger, greed, envy, hypocrisy, contentiousness. But now, if you are really converted into good trees, produce good fruits, witnesses of a spirit changed into its opposite. There is no need to change your dress or type of food; the evil desires of your hearts must be changed. That is the root of the tree; if it has a bitter, toxic sap, evil fruits grow on the branches. But if the root sends up a sweet, wholesome sap, fruits of the spirit worthy of God grow on the branches: love instead of hatred, joy instead of bitterness, peace instead of discord, tolerance instead of ferocity, beneficence instead of rapacity, chastity instead of shamelessness, honesty instead of deceit, modesty instead of arrogance, godliness instead of superstition.[15] These identify the true, authentic Jews, truly circumcised and truly sons of Abraham. God delights in these sacrifices. Now light is at hand; let shadows flee. Truth is near; let falsehood make way. Put aside the vain overconfidence that thus far the types and figures of spiritual things have offered you: Jerusalem the holy city, the "temple of the Lord, temple of the Lord, temple of the Lord,"[16] ritual butchering, ritual washing, sabbaths, new moons, dietary restrictions, broad phylacteries, gloomy fasts, and the other observances that either the Law prescribed as temporary signs of spiritual things or the Pharisees invented for their empty show of sanctity. All these and circumcision too will cease together. Hereafter a Jew will be anyone who confesses and acknowledges the one who is coming; anyone who has a heart purged by faith from evil desires

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15 The imagery of wild vines or trees that bear bitter fruit compared to cultivated ones that bear good fruit is found in both Testaments, eg Prov 11:30 and 12:12, Isa 5:2–7, Matt 7:16–20 and 12:33–5, Luke 6:43–5, Rom 11:17–24. Origen *Hom in Lucam* 22 PL 26 288C defines the 'fruits' here as the fruits of the spirit in Gal 5:22–3, listed in the Latin Origen and the Vulgate identically through *pax* 'peace.' Thereafter Origen's list is shorter – 'kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control, and the like' – than the one in Galatians. Erasmus' paraphrase on that passage (LB VII 964D / CWE 42 126) reflects Jerome's translation of Origen with a few differences in diction. Perhaps most interesting is that there he replaces *patientia* in the Vulgate and in Jerome's Origen with *lenitas animi* 'gentleness of spirit' (discussed in the annotation *patientia* on Gal 5:23) but with *tolerantia* in this paraphrase. The list of poisonous fruits preceding is not so clearly related to such biblical lists as Gal 5:19–21, Rom 1:29–31, Col 3:5–9, or 2 Tim 3:2–5, though it could be regarded as a summary of them.

16 Cf Jer 7:4.

will be circumcised.[17] In fact, just as the impiety of your ancestors will be no obstacle to you when you repent and turn to better things, so also the holiness of your forefather Abraham will do you no good if you continue in your original wickedness. You will be rejected, disowned, entirely destroyed unless you promptly change and bear fruit worthy of the gospel. Abraham will not be without posterity, God will not be without a people of his own to worship him and receive their promised inheritance, even if you separate yourselves from him. For I assure you of this: even from these stones God can raise up sons of Abraham his friend, to whom he promised a posterity equal to the sands of the sea and the stars in the sky.[18] Abraham will acknowledge as sons even Sogdians, Goths, and Scythians who embrace his Messiah; you he will count as strangers unless you believe. He has tolerated you this long, for all your bringing him the fruits of the Law: sacrificial victims, vows, fasts, ritual washing, days of rest, restrictions on food, trimmed foreskins. These had the appearance of religion on the surface only. They are leaves of the tree and cursed by God unless the fruits of the spirit are also there.[19]

'But now each one will be judged by the soul's true goods or evils. God's stricter judgment is near; the one who sees into the deepest corners of the heart is near.[20] Now the axe is placed at the root of the tree long tolerated. The people of Abraham will be cut out at the base and gentiles reflecting Abraham in their faith will be grafted in.[21] Moses was not heeded, the prophets were not heeded; you even killed many of them, you closed your

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17 Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 67, 136, 152, 157 defines 'Jew' as 'confessor.' For the circumcision of the heart see Deut 30:6, Rom 2:28–9, Col 2:11. Erasmus has expanded the words of the Baptist in 3:4–8 along much the same lines as the three canticles of the first two chapters, especially the theme of the new (Christian) Israel descended from Abraham; cf chapter 1, the paraphrase on 1:50 and 54–5, 53–4 and 56–7; on 1:68, 61–2; on 1:73–6, 63–5; on 1:79, 66; and chapter 2, the paraphrase on 30–2, 84.

18 'Abraham his friend' is *amico suo Abrahae*; see Isa 41:8. For Abraham's posterity as numerous as sand and stars, see Gen 22:17. Jerome *Comm in Matt* 1 PL 26 30B says the stones symbolize the gentiles for their hardness of heart, a description that may influence Erasmus' choice of gentile peoples distant from Palestine in the next sentence.

19 'Leaves of the tree' are not necessarily an indication of fruitfulness and are likely to lead to the tree's destruction; Matt 21:19, Mark 11:13, and this Gospel 13:6–9. Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 517A, a passage summarized in the *Catena aurea* (on 3:9), alludes to this story. Cf CWE 48 47–8 with n6.

20 For the theme of God's knowledge of the individual human heart, see eg 1 Chron 28:9, Ps 139:1–5 and 23–4, Jer 12:3 and 17:9–10.

21 See n19. For the grafting in of the gentiles see Rom 11:17–24.

ears to the voice of the Law.[22] Now one is near than whom no greater can be sent, and after whom no other is to be expected.[23] Destruction threatens the whole Israelite race if you do not restore yourselves in good time to a better fruit.[24] For every tree that has not produced the good fruit of faith is being cut down and thrown into the fire. There is no middle ground, there is no delay: you must either make haste to eternal life in true godliness or you must perish utterly and without reprieve.'

Terrified by this tirade of John's, so wild and threatening, the mixed crowd of Jews said, 'If that is so, then what do you think we should do to be able to escape divine wrath and reach salvation?' Those who recognize their disease and seek a remedy have already begun to be on the way to recovery.[25]

So John showed them the remedy that works everywhere. He did not call them to animal sacrifices and other Jewish propitiations but to works of charity. No sacrifice pleases God more quickly than kindness to one's neighbour. God is not in need of kindness from us, but he does allow whatever is offered to a needy neighbour out of regard for God to be credited as done to him.[26] 'Whoever has two shirts,' he said, 'let him clothe his naked brother in one of them. And whoever has enough food for two, let him give half of it to a hungry person.' In these two examples John baldly instructed the people that the most effective method of conciliating an angry God is if we are in every way kindly towards a neighbour struggling with a lack of anything at all: clothing, food, drink, lodging, assistance, consolation, teaching, exhortation. And not only is our brother's immediate necessity to be relieved out of our surplus, but some cutback in our comfortable habits is to be made when our

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22 For Jerusalem killer of her prophets see 13:34, Matt 23:27.

23 Cf the parable of the wicked tenants, 20:9–16.

24 'To a better fruit' is *ad meliorem frugem*. While *frux* (of which the stem is *frug*-) does denote the fruits of the earth, its uses in classical Latin tend to be metaphorical, indicating material or moral value. Cf the same expression in the paraphrase on 16:30 CWE 48 103 with n42.

25 Cf n13. Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 517B introduces the medical theme at this point, comparing the Baptist to a good doctor who has a particular remedy for each patient's condition.

26 Cf Matt 25:40. The exegetical tradition recognizes the primacy of works of charity as the best method for reconciliation of God and sinners, illustrated by the Baptist in one recommendation made to people in general and two addressed to two specific subgroups; so Origen *Hom in Lucam* 23 PL 26 290B–D, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1662C–1663A, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 517B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 354D quoting Ambrose and followed by the *Gloss* (on 3:11), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 740C, the *Catena aurea* (on 3:11), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 3:11).

neighbour's need demands immediate help.[27] This remedy, then, common to all, was presented to the mixed crowd.

Tax collectors came too, frightened by John's preaching. This was a class otherwise bent on thievery and in the habit of acquiring fortunes for itself from the people's misfortunes,[28] careless of religion and more inclined to obey the orders of princes than the commandments of God. Though they have a bad reputation among all nations, they were considered particularly abominable among the Jews; and yet John's stern preaching had impressed so much fear on everyone that even tax collectors came to John demanding baptism and wanting to learn how they could appease the divine wrath. And John, the true forerunner of him who would reject no one, no matter how deeply stained with sin, gave a soothing and calm answer even to the tax collectors. 'If you cannot yet be generous with your own wealth, the first step to a better life is surely to refrain from stealing other people's property.[29] You have a wage from Caesar; the amount you must collect[30] from the people is set. Do not extort for your own profit any more than the set amount.'

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27 Origen and Ambrose, followed by Bede, the *Gloss*, and the *Catena aurea* in the passages just cited, as well as Hugh of St Cher (on 3:11) 150r, note that the extent of mercy is defined by what is possible given the human condition, not just in terms of shirts, but in all that we have, lest anyone deprive himself entirely of what he himself needs – Bede says that dividing your only shirt with a naked man means that neither of you is clothed. Similarly but more positively here, Erasmus says that we are not only to give from our surplus but also some cutback is to be made (*aliquid decidendum*) in our comfortable habits (*commodis usibus*). Cf eg Acts 2:44–5, 4:32–7 and the paraphrases on these passages CWE 50 25 and 37–8.

28 'Fortunes for itself' is *sua commoda*; 'from the people's misfortunes' is *ex publicis incommodis*. The phrasing echoes Erasmus' favourite Latin playwright, Terence, who says in *Andria* 627–8, 'They rejoice in evils and from another's misfortunes [*incommodis*] acquire fortunes [*commoda*] for themselves.'

29 Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 740C notes on this passage that John's recommendations for tax collectors and soldiers, classes of people not capable of positive good, are merely to refrain from evil. Erasmus softens this view of tax collectors by saying, 'if you cannot yet be generous with your own wealth.' Cf Zacchaeus in 19:1–8, with its paraphrase in CWE 48 129–38, and contrast the extremely negative description of soldiers in what follows here.

30 'You must collect' (*debeatis exigere*). In a *1516* annotation *quam quod constitutum est vobis, faciatis* (on 3:13) Erasmus noted that the Greek verb πράσσετε 'do,' translated by its Latin equivalent *faciatis* 'do,' should have been *exigatis* (from *exigere*) 'collect, exact' because what the tax collectors are charged to do is to exact set sums in payment of taxes, though, he says, neither Valla nor Bede comments on the point. In *1519* he added that Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15

After the tax collectors soldiers came too. This is a violent and godless class of men, heedless of the laws, quick to violence, always ready to be bought off, taking pleasure in plunder, unrestrainedly wild and arrogant. Fear of divine vengeance had taken hold of[31] them too. They came to John, acknowledged their wickedness, sought baptism, asked how they might make God more favourable towards them. Indeed, it was great progress in this class of men to recognize its disease and be touched with desire for a better life. Nor did John go so far as to require doing good towards one's neighbour from these either, thinking it a big enough step for initial progress if they refrained from doing evil. Now this kind of person is usually troublesome in three ways in particular: violence, false accusation, and stealing.[32] For often they turn against their fellow citizens the weapons that the prince has provided for the defence of public tranquillity against an enemy, and they avenge private anger with the weapons with which public safety was to be maintained. And likewise they often loot, burn, rustle, rape women, break down doors, drive out and beat up strangers. Since they usually do so with impunity, they think they are entitled to do it. Others again make false accusations before princes or generals against the innocent, so that part of the confiscated property will be paid to them, the reward of their false words. Sometimes princes connive at such deeds, wanting to make their soldiers happy. Many, while they waste what the prince gives them as wages in whoring, gambling, and drunkenness, repair their losses by looting and

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1662C, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 354D, uses *exigere* in explicating the passage; Erasmus follows their lead here.

31 'Taken hold of' translates *cœperant* as *ceperant* (ie not *coeperant* 'began'), a common ambivalent spelling in early printed texts.

32 In the annotation *calumniam faciatis* (on 3:14) Erasmus said that John wants soldiers to give up two practices: unwarranted use of force against occupied populations, and false accusations to commanders against the same people, leading to financial penalties for the accused and bounties for the soldiers.
The violent behaviour of soldiers against civilians is recognized by the exegetical tradition, whose individual representatives are likely to be as familiar with it by direct experience as from the literary trope. See Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1662C, the basis for Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 355A, who is quoted by the *Gloss* (on 3:14). The *Catena aurea* (on 3:14) cites Augustine *Contra Faustum* 22.74 PL 42 447. The same ideas differently expressed appear in Hugh of St Cher (on 3:14) 150V, who identifies the three faults of soldiers for which the Baptist recommends reformed behaviours as oppression of the poor, false accusations made to squeeze money from the wealthy accused, and extortion. Nicholas of Lyra (on 3:14) comments similarly. Erasmus will elaborate vividly on the three ways soldiers are troublesome.

theft, and not only do not pay their debts but even extort from the countryfolk what they do not owe, and believe they are allowed to do as they please in the name of war. – Yet war too has its own rules: it is not to be entirely condemned if it is undertaken for a just cause, that is, for the defence of public tranquillity; if it cannot be avoided; if undertaken by godfearing princes, with the consent of those in whose interest it is undertaken; if declared by legitimate procedures; if waged in just and moderate ways, that is, with the least possible spilling of human blood, with the least possible loss of those who gave no cause for war; if the soldiers' recklessness is held in check by the commanders; if there is no combat except by sworn soldiers, only at the generals' order and when the signal for attack is given; if fighting ceases as soon as the horns have sounded retreat; if the war ends as quickly as possible.[33] – So John showed this class of men what they usually do and what they ought to avoid hereafter if they want to avoid the vengeance of God. 'Do not rob anyone,' he said, 'do not accuse anyone falsely for profit; be content with your pay.'

But John did these things with so much authority that the people began to suspect that he was the Messiah.[34] Many were turning it over privately in unspoken reflection, though because of his extreme modesty John himself showed no signs of his supposed magnificence. For the lightmindedness of ordinary folk is such that they attribute to those they admire more than is due and have only bad things to say about those they dislike.[35] But this tendency of the people made clear the utter modesty of the holy man, who was so far from claiming for himself an interest in another's glory that when it was spontaneously offered to him he rejected it with vigour. And the crowd's

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33 Like Augustine, Hugh, and Nicholas just cited, Erasmus follows his negative remarks about soldiers with an assertion of the legitimacy of war under the proper circumstances. For similar unflattering treatments of the common, often mercenary, soldier, see the colloquies *Militaria* 'Military Affairs' (1522) and *Militis et Cartusiani* 'The Soldier and the Carthusian' (1523) CWE 39 53–63 and 328–43, with the notes and introductory essays there. For Erasmus' views on just war, see *Adagia* IV i 1 *Dulce bellum inexpertis* 'War is a treat for those who have not tried it' (1515), *Institutio principis christiani* (1516) CWE 27 200–88, especially 282–8, and *Querela pacis* (1517) CWE 27 292–322.

34 As he had done before, Erasmus here replaces the *Christus* of Luke's text with *Messias*; see chapter 2 n16.

35 Origen *Hom in Lucam* 25 PL 26 295A–296B uses this bit of Luke to illustrate at some length the danger of immoderate affection that overvalues what it loves. For Origen the crowd comes to this exaggerated conclusion on the basis of John's uncommon lifestyle, as Erasmus will make John say in the next paragraph.

mistake had the result that the rank of Christ, who was still known to only a few, was confirmed by John's weighty and public witness.

As soon as, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he grasped the people's unspoken thoughts, he addressed them like this: 'You judge me by things you see, my food and dress and baptism; but things not seen are much more powerful.[36] In the same way the force of spirit is much more remarkable in a person than the strength of body that is visible to the eye. Though I baptize you with water, I do not remit sins; but I prepare you for the more effective baptism that you will receive from him whose coming I announce to you – I am the elder in time and earlier in order of preaching, but far inferior in might.[37] For he who follows me is so much more excellent than I that I, whom you believe to be something great, am not worthy to undo his shoestrings. I am his servant, not his partner; I am his forerunner, but as the morning star precedes the sun, I am soon to be hidden by the greater light.[38] And this that I have, I have from his kindness. My teaching is weak if it is compared to his teaching; my baptism is powerless if it is set side by side with his. He, the heavenly one, will teach heavenly things; I am a man of earth and speak earthly and humble things.[39] I dip the body in water; he will dip your hearts in the Holy Spirit and in fire. As much more penetrating is wind[40] than water, as much more effective is fire than water, so much more powerful will his baptism be than mine.

'The identity of true practitioners of godliness has been hidden thus far. Washing in water is easy, sacrificing animals is easy, not eating pork is easy. Now such teaching is being offered, such times are near, that who is truly good and who is the opposite cannot be hidden. For he is coming to do

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36 Hugh of St Cher (on 3:16) 150v specifies perceptible qualities of John, though different ones, that led people to think he was the Christ: the power of his preaching, the austerity of his way of life, and his miraculous birth. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1663A says it is God's gift that John can understand the people's thoughts; Hugh says it is by revelation of the Holy Spirit.

37 Cf John 1:15, 27, and 30, with their paraphrases CWE 46 24–5, 29, and 30; and Matt 3:11, with its paraphrase CWE 45 65.

38 'Morning star' here is *lucifer*; cf chapter 1 n125. For the Baptist's role as one who announces the coming of the great light, thus himself being like the star that heralds the rising of the sun, see eg 1:76–9 and 2:32 paraphrased above, as well as John 1:4–8 and 5:35, with their paraphrases CWE 46 18–20 and 71.

39 Cf John 3:31.

40 'Wind' (*spiritus*). The 'wind' Erasmus is thinking of here is another meaning of *spiritus* 'spirit,' as in John 3:5–8, though the English translation obscures the connection with the Holy Spirit just mentioned.

what he promised so often in the prophets: to pass judgment and reveal the distinction between the godly and the ungodly. For he will have a winnowing fork in his hand. All power in heaven and earth has been given to him, and with this inescapable winnowing fork he will clear his threshing floor, winnowing and examining everyone in the wind of his cross and afflictions. Those who are chaff, glossy with the appearance of religiosity but inwardly empty of true religion, will fly off wherever human passion takes them. But those who are wheat, inwardly possessing solid, true godliness, will not be scattered by the wind but will be shaken free of the chaff and show their unmoving strength of spirit. That blast will not make people godless but will expose what they were even when they did not seem so, as the risen sun does not make people blind or ugly but reveals who was ugly or blind. The gospel truth is light; it will be intolerable to those who advertised themselves with a false display of holiness though they were impious in God's eyes. Those who, though they were considered worthless by worldly standards, nonetheless had in their heart a real love for godliness will be embraced.[41]

'Those who on hearing the vigour of the heavenly teaching will be provoked to evil and murder will not then turn wicked for the first time; what they already were will be exposed when the occasion is offered. For an occasion does not cause but reveals their godless state. When the disposal of possessions is made a prerequisite, when the risk of a cross and death is made clear, one who backs off from proclamation of the truth will not begin then to be ungodly for the first time; he will show what he was before. Not just anyone who has been baptized will immediately be resolute in this examination, but whoever has drunk deep of the heavenly Spirit, whoever has received the fire of invincible love, will be moved by no storm. That person will be made cleaner and firmer, as wheat is cleansed by the winnowing of the wind and gold by the force of fire.[42] So let everyone prepare for this rigorous and exact examination, putting no faith in nobility of birth, in sanctity of ancestors, in the physical ceremonies of Mosaic law, but fortifying his heart with firmer defences. What kind of person each will be found to be will make a great difference. Eternal salvation and eternal damnation will separate the solid and the hollow, the true Israelites and the bastard offspring. He will store the pure wheat in the granary of heavenly life but will burn up the chaff

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41 That the coming baptism and testing will reveal, not create, the genuinely good and genuinely evil among believers is discussed by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 26 PL 26 298D–299A.

42 The figure of gold proved by fire is found in Prov 17:3 and 27:21, Zec 13:9, Mal 3:3, and 1 Cor 3:11–15.

in inextinguishable fire. Judgment will be delayed in some measure here, but after this life eternal punishment will be inflicted on the ungodly.'[43]

With this and many other words John exhorted the people to penitence for their former life and to desire for the Messiah to come, frightening them with danger, stirring them up with rewards, and with the good news of salvation arousing their hearts to pursuit of gospel godliness. And this frank way of speaking, thanks to the notable holiness of the man, was tolerated by the general crowd, by the tax collectors, even by the soldiers; when rebuked they acknowledged their sickness, when frightened they sought a cure.

But Herod did not tolerate it, in his tyrannical pride wanting whatever he pleased to be permitted him. Yet he was fond of John, he saw and approved the rare blamelessness of his life,[44] and in many regards he submitted to the man's advice. But on the point on which he particularly ought to have heeded John's words, he not only did not submit, he actually threw his wise advisor into prison and destroyed the one who was calling him back from the brink of destruction. Often enough the minds of princes are like this when the wisdom of the gospel has not set them free from the rule of base desires. They who rule others are themselves in servitude to their own violent passions, and they think they are kings on precisely these grounds, that without fear of retribution they are slaves of immorality. Sometimes they attach to themselves men respected for holy living, sometimes they converse with them, they do a few things on their advice – not because they have true godliness at heart but in order to win a reputation for uprightness with this sham and to ease the resentment aimed at evildoers: as when they rob their own people, stir up unjust wars, and commit savagery against those who wish the state well, they may seem to do such things on the advice of thoroughly upright men. So Herod misapplied to the support of his own tyranny

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43 The exegetical tradition suggests that the reference here is to Judgment Day at the end of the world: Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1664D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 356C–D, the *Gloss* (on 3:17) quoting Bede, Hugh of St Cher (on 3:17) 151r, and the *Catena aurea* (on 3:17) quoting Ambrose and Bede. Bede and Hugh also say that there is a partial division made in this life by ecclesiastical action that removes some church members for cause; Erasmus also alludes to some measure of judgment in this life.

44 'Blamelessness of his life' is *vitae integritatem*. The phrase is used eg by the Latin biographer Cornelius Nepos (a contemporary of Cicero and Julius Caesar) in the opening sentence of his essay on the notable Athenian general Phocion, *Phocion* 1.1; and a similar phrase *integer vitae* 'blameless in my life' begins Horace *Odes* 1.22. Herod's apparent respect for the Baptist is reported in Mark 6:20.

the camel's hair in which John was clothed, the leather belt he wore, his modest diet, the innocence of his entire life, the authority he enjoyed with the people. So too later on our Lord Jesus called him 'that fox.'[45] Such is the cunning of the princes of this world; whenever men of the gospel happen to be summoned by princes, they must either avoid close association with those at whose courts they will inevitably be corrupted quite soon, or they should prepare their minds for the kind of reward for unvarnished truth that befell John.

For Herod, not departing from his father's and grandfather's character, did many ungodly and tyrannical deeds: plundering his people, squelching freedom, punishing in others what he himself had done, putting public offices and the priesthood up for sale, and openly keeping Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, whom he had snatched up while Philip was still alive, along with Philip's daughter. The holy man, not enduring such an incestuous marriage in the royal house, which should be a model of keeping the laws, warned him to refrain from such an ungodly crime. But the ungodly request of a dancing girl and the prompting of an ungodly woman had more effect on the godless king than the sound admonition of such an incorruptible man. Herod was so far from being corrected by John's advice that to his earlier outrages he added the most ungodly of all, throwing John into prison and even proceeding to such madness that he beheaded an entirely innocent man and gave his head to the girl as a reward for her filthy dancing.[46]

But to come back to the sequence of events: Before our Lord Jesus took up the task of preaching, which he would complete in a short time, in order to

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45 See 13:32. The behaviour of Herod described here is not usually regarded as a function of his cunning in the exegetical tradition. The general qualities of a tyrant mentioned in this and the next paragraphs come up often in Erasmus' various descriptions of the tyrant or unjust king; see eg *Institutio principis christiani* (*The Education of a Christian Prince*) CWE 27 223–30 and the long essays on *Adagia* I iii 1 *Aut regem aut fatuum nasci oportere* 'One ought to be born a king or a fool' CWE 31 227–36, especially 234–5, and *Adagia* III vii 1 *Scarabeus aquilam quaerit* 'A dung-beetle hunting an eagle' CWE 35 178–214, especially 188–90.

46 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 357D–358A says that Luke's intention for his short out-of-order summary of the relations between Herod and John was to highlight the very different reactions of the people and the ruler to John's rebukes; the same idea is in the *Gloss* (on 3:19–20) citing Bede, and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 741C. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1665A–B notes Luke's fine restraint in leaving the whole story to be understood rather than stating it expressly. Erasmus instead elaborates on the details of the event as given in full at Matt 14:3–12 and Mark 6:17–28.

fulfil every part of modesty[47] and righteousness, he did not think it beneath him to come to baptism with the others, not indeed needing purification himself but to sanctify for us by his own baptism the washing that imparts eternal salvation.[48] He humbled himself, but by John's voice and by the very plain witness of the eternal Father he was openly commended to all, so that they too would recognize by sight the one about whom the prophets had spoken and John had borne witness. So when a large number of all kinds of people was being baptized and among them as one of many, Jesus Christ, like a man in bondage to sin, asked John for baptism, John refused. He recognized the perfection of purity in the other,[49] from whom he had more need of baptism. This was the first testimony from John to the significance of Jesus in the latter's presence and given before the people, but the Father marked out his Son from the others being baptized by a clearer sign. No sign appeared when others were baptized. Yet when our Lord Jesus was baptized and then was praying (teaching us, by the way, that when our innocence has been restored by baptism we should turn directly to spiritual pursuits, among which prayer has first place[50]), heaven – closed till then but made accessible to us by his baptism – opened. And from it the Holy Spirit came down, invisible by nature, of course, but at that moment clothed in a visible form so that he would be perceptible to human eyes. For his appearance was

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47 'Modesty' (*modestia*), a term defined by Cicero *De inventione* 2.164, in reference to the aspiring public speaker, as 'that through which an honourable sense of respect for others is rewarded with a well-known and established authority.' (This is an early-modern reading of Cicero's text; modern editors differ in details of the adjectives translated here as 'honourable' and 'well-known.' See the critical edition by G. Achard, Paris 1994.)

48 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1665A notes that the Lord wants not to be cleansed by the baptism but to cleanse the waters by his sinless flesh and thus give them the power of baptism; the comment is summarized by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 358B, the *Gloss* (on 3:21), and Hugh of St Cher (on 3:21) 151v.

49 'Perfection of purity in the other' is *excellentiam in illo puritatis* in *1534 and 1535*. In *1523* and *1524* the text read *autorem puritatis* 'the author (or 'source') of purity.' Cf Heb 5:9 and 12:2.

50 That Jesus' praying immediately after his baptism is a model for all because they must strengthen and secure their rebirth is noted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 358C, the *Gloss* (on 3:21), Hugh of St Cher (on 3:21) 151v, and the *Catena aurea* (on 3:21) citing Chrysostom. Erasmus had already suggested the spiritual fragility of baptized persons who have not yet actively undertaken their spiritual development in his comment on the judgment that will separate good from evil mortals, 113.

that of a dove, because this bird, the symbol of innocence, had once brought the olive branch to the ark, the sign that divine wrath had been satisfied and the pledge of the flood's end.[51] That flood, which had cleansed the world, was a figure of our baptism, whereby our sins are drowned but our bodies and souls are saved. So in this form the Holy Spirit descended to the holy head of our Lord Jesus, clearly signifying that he was the one whom the Father had liberally anointed[52] with all the heavenly gifts that he would pour out on all who trusted in him and were grafted by baptism into the fellowship of his body.

To this was added the clear evidence of the Father's voice, not now coming forth through prophets or Moses or angels but proclaimed by the Father himself. Not that the Father can be heard or seen or perceived as he is by any bodily sense; but as the invisible Spirit made himself accessible to human eyes by a visible sign, likewise the Father struck human ears with a voice echoing through the upper elements. And the voice thundered from on high in these words: 'You are my uniquely dear Son,[53] in whom I am well pleased.' To no one of the holy men of old was such a witness given. The dove, coming first, indicated to whom that saying applied, lest anyone suppose that in this statement John was being praised, of whom many thought so highly that they believed he was the Messiah. Christ wished to be commended to the world by so many witnesses before he was equipped

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51 For the story of Noah's ark and the dove see Genesis 6–8, especially 8:6–20. The exegetical tradition notes that Jesus' baptism, followed by the descent of the dove, opens heaven to sinners: Origen *Hom in Lucam* 27 PL 26 301A–B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 358D–359A, followed by the *Gloss* (on 3:22), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 741D, Hugh of St Cher (on 3:22) 151V. The innocence of the dove generally, with its connection to the story of Noah, is mentioned by most of these. Erasmus leaves aside here treatment of the dove as a sign of a second Eve, representing mother church, as in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1666C–1668B.

52 Erasmus' insertion here of a reference to anointing, apart from its very frequent use in the OT historical books (especially 1 Kings through Chronicles) and its appearance in Pss 45:7, 89:20, and 133:2, may be a glance forward to 4:18–21, where Jesus claims that the words of Isa 61:1–2 apply to him.

53 'Uniquely dear' (*unice carus*). For the emphasis added by 'uniquely' here, cf Erasmus' annotation *tu es filius meus* (on 3:22), where he had observed that the Greek definite article in the predicate of this sentence, ὁ υἱός μου literally 'the son of me,' was not an idle addition but had particular demonstrative force. He appears to mean that Jesus is the Son of God in a way that all the others called sons of God – believers, that is – are not. Cf eg Rom 8:14, Gal 4:5–6.

for the task of preaching the gospel, warning us meanwhile by his example that no one should take on such a great responsibility suddenly and with unwashed feet.[54] Privately he had received the witness of angels, of Elizabeth, of Simeon, of Anna, of the Magi;[55] publicly from John, whose authority among the Jews was very considerable, from the Holy Spirit, from the Father himself.

To all of these was joined the authority derived from his age. For when our Lord Jesus came to baptism, he was nearing the end of his thirtieth year[56] – not that age counts for anything with God, but because it was fitting that

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54 'With unwashed feet' (*illotis pedibus*), an adage meaning to undertake a task unprepared, found in both Latin and Greek. See *Illotis pedibus ingredi* 'To enter with unwashed feet' and its companion *Illotis manibus* 'With unwashed hands' *Adagia* I ix 54 and 55. There may also be an allusion to Jesus' injunction in John 13:15 after washing his disciples' feet, a passage mentioned by Hugh of St Cher (on 3:21–2) 151v in his third answer to his fifth question on the baptism of Jesus; see also the paraphrase on the passage in John CWE 46 160–2.

55 Cf chapter 2 78, 87, and the paraphrase on Matt 3:12 CWE 45 67.

56 'Nearing the end' (*accedebat*). Origen *Hom in Lucam* 28 PL 26 303C notes that the patriarch Joseph in Gen 41:46 rises to prominence in Egypt at age thirty, and in many ways is a type of Jesus. Gregory the Great *Hom in Ezech* 1.2 PL 76 796B–797B says that Ezekiel began his career as a prophet in his thirtieth year (Ezek 1:1–3) because that age is appropriate for a teacher; even Jesus did not instruct the elders in the temple when he was twelve but only asked them questions. Though God might cause children to perform miracles, Gregory says, what we learn from instruction is different from what is conveyed in miracles. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 359A says that Jesus' beginning his ministry at thirty is a message to those who think every age is suitable for the priesthood or for teaching, and quotes Gregory. Both are cited in the *Gloss* (on 3:23) to the same effect. Hugh of St Cher (on 3:23) gives the same advice about the age for beginning a preaching career, though in other words, pointing out that the Levites began their service at this age (eg Num 4:29, 39, 43).
Jesus' exact age receives some discussion in the exegetical tradition, focused around the application of the Gospel's word ἀρχόμενος, *incipiens* 'beginning.' Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 10 PG 57 185 speaks of Jesus as having completed thirty years and thus at full manhood; Augustine *Tractatus in evangelium Joannis* 14 PL 35 1504, commenting on John 3:30, says emphatically that the Baptist and Jesus were both thirty years old, though John was the elder by six months. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 744B, like Chrysostom, says Jesus was thirty, the age of complete manhood; the same opinion is held by Hugh of St Cher (on 3:23) 152r. But Nicholas of Lyra (on 3:23), though understanding Luke to mean that Jesus was beginning his thirty-first year (citing Augustine and Chrysostom), acknowledges that others think Luke says he was beginning

one who would draw all people to himself[57] should satisfy everyone in every way and that there should be nothing in him that anyone could reasonably take as cause for offence. So a maturity of years was chosen and waited for, inasmuch as young manhood lacks authority because of the general view of its inexperience, and old age carries less weight because of failing mental powers and the suspicion of senility.

But among common people a flaw in lineage also weakens authority greatly. So provision was made for Jesus to be believed to be the son of Joseph until the gospel had become sufficiently well known by his miracles and preaching. It was Christ's distinction to be born of a virgin, but since there was no need for that fact to become known immediately and it would have been very difficult for people to be persuaded of it, he put the general error to use, lest anything diminish his authority as a preacher if he were plausibly said, for instance, to be born from an act of adultery. He chose to come from a humble home, but one unspotted by any rumour of stain. Indeed a teacher of the gospel must avoid not only wrongdoing but every appearance of wrongdoing, and he ought to be commended not only by his virtues but also by being free from things from which people generally form a suspicion of evil. And certainly the common human view is that good children are scarcely ever born of evil parents. Therefore he who did not shun the reproach of poverty or the humbleness of his home avoided insult to his age and lineage. Besides, though Joseph was not the father of Jesus in the natural way but only according to law, because he was the mother's promised spouse, still, since he had taken a wife from his own tribe and lineage, it seems a good idea to go over the genealogy of the Lord from Joseph, so as to establish more clearly that he was truly human, a descendant according to the flesh of those from whom the sayings of the prophets predicted he would

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his thirtieth year (and so was only twenty-nine). Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 3:23) remarks on the Vulgate's misuse of *quasi* 'as if' in this verse for the multivalent Greek ὡσεί. Erasmus in the *1516* annotation *quasi annorum* (on 3:23) prefers to say *circiter* 'around' instead of *quasi* and says that two interpretations are possible for 'beginning': that Jesus had begun his thirtieth year or that he was 'nearing' (*accedebat*) the completion of his thirtieth year, the meaning he seems to have chosen in the paraphrase here. For Edward Lee's objections to the annotation, see Erasmus' *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* Note 45 CWE 72 153–4.

57 'Draw all people to himself' is an allusion to John 12:32, in Erasmus' preferred reading of 'all people' rather than 'all things.' See the paraphrase on this verse CWE 46 155 with n37; and cf chapter 1 n12.

be born.[58] For in his higher nature the Father himself acknowledged and proclaimed him his Son.

Joseph, then, the husband of the Virgin Mary who gave birth to Jesus, was called the son of Heli, his uncle according to the Law but by actual begetting was the son of Jacob, who raised up Joseph his son for his uterine brother (who had died without children) out of Heli's widow.[59]

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58 Erasmus prefaces Luke's genealogy of Jesus, which (unlike that in Matt 1:1–17) begins from Joseph and goes back to Adam and God (3:23–38), with a recapitulation of points he had made earlier about Joseph's legal and de facto status as (foster) father, and the providential reasons for that status. See the paraphrases on 1:26–7, 39 and 2:4, 69, with the associated notes. A similar recapitulation is made by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1671B–C.

An issue in the tradition is why Luke's genealogy goes in reverse order from that in Matthew. The general view is that Matthew's is introductory to the Incarnation and thus stresses the precedents to the miraculous birth; Luke's version, coming immediately after Jesus' baptism and the divine affirmation of paternity in 3:22, emphasizes that this mortal is indeed the child of God and models what mortals become through their baptism. See eg Origen *Hom in Lucam* 28 PL 26 302B, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1676C, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 10 PG 57 185, Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* PL 34 1076 and *Sermones de scripturis* 51 PL 38 350–1, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 361B.

59 The first question in the genealogy proper is how Joseph can be called 'son of Heli' by Luke but be fathered by Jacob in Matt 1:16, and secondarily how the names of the grandfathers can also differ. The agreed solution is that Jacob is Joseph's biological father and Heli his father in Jewish law, based on Deut 25:5–6, and that the discrepancy in grandfathers can be explained the same way. See Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* 1.7 PG 20 89B–95C; Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1676C–D; Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 1 PL 26 23C–24A; Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.5 PL 35 1334–5, *De consensu evangelistarum* PL 34 1076, and *Sermones de scripturis* 51 PL 38 348–9, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 361C–362A; the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 3:23); Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 744D; Hugh of St Cher (on 3:23) 152r; the *Catena aurea* (on 3:23) citing Ambrose, Augustine, and Bede; and Nicholas of Lyra (on 3:23), who refers the reader to his commentary on Matt 1:2 and 1:15–16, the latter with a diagram. Erasmus declines to go into amplifying detail here, though it is noteworthy that the expression 'uterine brother' is used also by Ambrose and by Bede *In Matthaeum expos* PL 92 10C.

There are other differences between the two evangelists' lists, but Erasmus does not discuss them in this paraphrase. In his annotation *qui fuit Heli* (on 3:23) and the following three annotations, long to begin with and corrected or amplified over the lifetime printing history of the *Annotations*, he discusses further technical details at length. His closing comment in all editions is this: 'Paul warns in more than one place that pious people should avoid such genealogies and never-ending questions, for they not only contribute nothing to piety but also

Heli was the son of Matthat, and he in turn had Levi for his father.[60] Levi was the offspring of Melchi, who was fathered by Jannai[61] son of Mattathias, whose father was Amos. Amos was sired by Nahum son of Esli, sired by his parent Naggai.

And he was the scion of Maath son of Mattathias. The latter was the seed of Semein son of Josech, fathered by Joda.

Joda had as father Joanan son of Rhesa, scion of Zerubbabel. The latter's father was Shealtiel, himself scion of Neri son of Melchi, who took his descent from Addi son of Cosam, fathered by Elmadam.

He took his descent from Er son of Joshua, born of Eliezer son of Jorim. The latter had been sired by Matthat, himself born of Levi son of Simeon, born of Judah son of Joseph, whom Jonam had sired, himself son of Eliakim, son of Melea.[62]

He was born of Mattatha, who was son of Nathan; him King David had fathered by Bathsheba, through whom the line of Solomon had begun but had been found wanting in Ahaziah.[63]

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generate strife and contention, a blight on Christian concord.' The advice was ignored; Edward Lee's criticism of the annotations on this subject provoked Erasmus to reply in Notes 35 through 44 of his *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* CWE 72 134–53. For a modern treatment see Fitzmyer AB Luke 488–98.

60 In 3:23–38 Luke uses the word 'son' only once, for 'son of Joseph,' and thereafter leaves 'son' to be understood in an uninterrupted pattern natural to Latin and Greek of clauses in the form 'who was [ie son of] of N' all the way through Adam. Matt 1:1–16 uses the pattern 'and N begot N.' Erasmus paraphrases with a variety of expressions for father / son relationships, approximated in the translation; he varies vocabulary and tenses and voices (active or passive) of the verbs, or uses adverbial or adjectival modifiers instead of verbs. The series of names is also punctuated by a pair of brief amplifications, on verses 31 and 34 at David and Abraham, the two ancestors also strongly marked in Matthew; cf Matt 1:1 and 17. Where Matthew mentions four women (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, the wife of Uriah: Matt 1:3–6) and ends with Mary, and where Luke mentions no women, Erasmus includes Mary at the outset (3:23) and two other women: Bathsheba (ie the wife of Uriah) the mother of Solomon and Sarah the wife of Abraham and mother of Isaac; cf also 'made from the clay of the earth as from a mother' at the end of the paraphrase on verse 38.
The Latinized Hebrew names of Erasmus' text are anglicized according to RSV in the translation.

61 Erasmus omits Joseph father of Jannai.

62 Erasmus omits Menna father of Melea.

63 Presumably the Ahaziah king of Judah, described in 2 Kings 9 and 2 Chronicles 22, cited by Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 22D. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1676D–1677B had noted that Matthew derives Jesus from Solomon but Luke from David's son Nathan; see 2 Sam 5:14 and 1 Chron 3:5.

David was fathered by Jesse son of Obed, offspring of Boaz. His father was Sala son of Nahshon, offspring of Amminadab, whose father had been Aram son of Hezron, scion of Perez son of Judah.[64]

Judah took his descent from the patriarch Jacob son of Isaac, whom according to the divine promise[65] the aged Abraham had begotten from the elderly Sarah, himself the offspring of Terah son of Nahor child of Serug son of Reu, whose father was Peleg son of Eber, offspring of Shelah, son of Cainan son of Arphaxad, whose father was Shem son of Noah, whom Lamech had fathered, son of Methuselah son of Enoch son of Jared, himself the child of Mahalaleel son of Cainan offspring of Enos, the son of Seth, whom Adam fathered after he was one hundred thirty years old.[66] Adam was the first of the human race, having no other author of his line than God, by whom he was made from the clay of the earth as from a mother.[67]

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64 RSV lists Amminadab, Admin, Arni, Hezron. The *Gloss*, Erasmus, and the Clementine Vulgate all have (in Latin) Aminadab, Aram, Esrom.

65 For the divine promise to Abraham see Gen 12:1–4 and 15:6, cited by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1674A–C.

66 For the conception of Seth see Gen 4:25 and 5:3.

67 At the mention of Adam Luke made no change in the pattern of his list; see n60. Erasmus departs from his syntactical and verbal variation on expressions for 'son'; he identifies Adam as the first human, calls God his *auctor* 'author, source' or 'parent,' and uses 'mother' (*mater*) as the metaphor for the material of his human body. This sentence concludes the genealogy but also introduces a short essay on the ways in which the earthly Adam prefigures the second Adam of 1 Cor 15:22 and 45–9. Besides providing both relief to the reader from the long genealogy and an attractive conclusion to chapter 3 of the *Paraphrase*, the essay also serves to conclude all three opening chapters, focused as they are in Luke on the preparation of Jesus the incarnate God for his earthly ministry. Now the reader's attention is refocused on Jesus' active reversal of the human failure that began with Adam.

While Erasmus thus acknowledges the break in the narrative established by the Gospel text itself, he seems also to be influenced by a similar move made by Ambrose at the beginning of his commentary on Luke 4, *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1695B–1700C. In the course of a long introduction to the account of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, moralizing on the temptations that distract from Christian pursuits, like the temptations that faced Ulysses on his long journey home and the pleasures of life in the world, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1697D–1698B draws a contrast between the first and second Adam. He lists eight pairs of parallels between Adam and Jesus: Adam goes from Paradise to the wilderness, Jesus from the wilderness to paradise. Adam is made from virgin earth, Jesus from a human virgin. Adam is made in the image of God; Jesus is the image of God. Adam is placed over irrational living things, Jesus over all

But since through the sin of this earthly parent the whole human race was damaged and, reflecting the mind of its progenitor, had fallen into every kind of sin, the Lord Jesus was sent as the renewer and redeemer of a fallen race, so that what had come to ruin by the disobedience of one might be reconciled by the obedience of one. And as all who had followed in the footsteps of their earthly parent were rendered bound to death, likewise all who, once removed through baptism from kinship with the sinner, were grafted into the heavenly Adam, who is Jesus Christ, by staying fast in his footsteps would achieve everlasting life in heaven. And in many ways the beginning of the fall of the human race and of its restoration correspond. For nothing was done here by chance, but the whole sequence of events was governed by the divine plan. The virgin Eve's conversation with the snake was the beginning of disaster. The Virgin Mary's conversation with Gabriel was the beginning of salvation. Corrupted by the temptation of the apple that was good to look at, Eve destroyed her husband and brought death to the world; Mary, always the flawless Virgin steadfastly spurning the temptations of the flesh and offering herself in singleminded faith to the divine will, gave birth to the man who brought salvation to the world. Adam was tempted and defeated; Christ was tempted and defeated his tempter. Adam obeyed his corrupt wife and was thrown out of Paradise; Christ obeyed his Father so far as to die and opened the pathway to heaven. For the pleasure of the taste of an apple the one became the devil's slave; spurning all the kingdoms and enticements of the world Christ handed his enemy over to be bound for us. The one destroyed his heritage by eating an apple; the other recovered the lost by abstinence from food. The one was driven out of Paradise into a dangerous and desert land; the other made straight the path from the desert into heaven. Through lust for prideful knowledge the one dragged his descendants into death; through the humble obedience of faith the other gave them back life. Then there is a tree at either end. There the serpent conquered and deceived by means of a tree; here Christ deceived and conquered by means of a tree.

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living things. Foolishness comes through a woman; wisdom comes through a virgin (cf *mulier* and *virgo* in chapter 2 n38). In Adam there is death by a tree, in Jesus life through the (wooden) cross. Adam, stripped of spiritual things, covered himself with cast-offs from a tree; Jesus, stripped of worldly things, needed no coverings. Adam was in a desert; Jesus was in a desert but knew where he could find the damned person to bring him back to Paradise. Erasmus makes all the same comparisons and subdivides some to make his list longer; then he goes on a bit further to show how Moses and Joshua are types of Jesus but inasmuch as they are only human can also be contrasted with him.

Death by a tree; life by a tree.[68] The prince of death was created from virgin soil; the Prince of life from the Virgin Mary. Adam was made in the image of God; Christ, the image of God, took both the image and the nature of a human being. Adam was deceived through his spouse; Christ called back the church his spouse from her diabolical error. There a woman brought forth the beginning of foolishness while she grasped at becoming wise; here a woman while claiming nothing for herself bore for us the source of all wisdom. While Adam chose to be wise rather than obedient, he brought foolishness into the world; the new Adam, though he was the wisdom of the Father, became foolish for our sake so that we might be made wise in him. The fall through pride; the arising through humility. Stripped of his heart's endowments by the serpent, Adam covered himself with the cast-offs of a tree; rich in heavenly gifts Christ lacked for nothing in this world. And the figures of the Old Testament match the gospel narrative. Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, Christ freed them from the shadows of ignorance and from enslavement to sin. For them there was a passage through water; the road to salvation and freedom is through baptism. Back then there was the pillar of cloud and fire; and here the Father resounds from the cloud and the Holy Spirit baptizes with fire. Through the Old Law the occasion of death; through the gospel law the recall to salvation. But the Old Law frightens with thunder and lightning; the gospel law invites to salvation with gentleness and good deeds. Moses was alarming to look at, so alarming that he had to veil his face; Christ is calm and cheerful amidst the throng. Moses went up on a mountain to talk to God; Christ came down to us so that through him God might talk to us. The first Adam, while he sought equality with God, was compared to mindless oxen;[69] the second Adam, when he cast himself down from his divinity to the lowliness of human nature, lifted us, even less than oxen, to fellowship in divinity. And then through Joshua son of Nun a return to the land flowing with milk and honey;[70] through Jesus son of a virgin a return to paradise.

So let us retreat from the nature of our first parents, and in looking closely at the life of the Lord Jesus, let us embrace with pure minds his act of loving-kindness and imitate his example in pious efforts as best we can.

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68 Here Erasmus imitates Ambrose's fondness for the pithy two-clause sentence with no expressed verbs. Ambrose says 'Death by a tree; life through the cross' (*mors per arborem, vita per crucem*); Erasmus says *per arborem mors, per arborem vita*. Compare 'The fall through pride; the arising through humility' and 'through Joshua . . . a return; . . . through Jesus . . . a return' just below, this page, not parallel to any statements in the Ambrose passage.

69 Gen 2:17–19

70 Exod 3:8; Josh 5:6

Let us embrace the gentle founder of the gospel law. Let us follow our leader who alone can lead all the nations of the whole world to that land always overflowing with every kind of joy.

Chapter 4

The dove that had settled on his head was no empty sign, and so now full of the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan before undertaking the task of gospel preaching, so as to make his start tested in every respect.[1] Teaching that after baptism one's duty is to strive for loftier pursuits of godliness,[2] he separated himself from the crowd (for sharing ordinary people's life often stains and even trivializes a teacher's authority) and was driven into the desert by the Spirit that had completely possessed him.[3] John too had come out of the desert to public notice. Jesus went into the desert as if to challenge the foe of the human race to bring on his crafts and devices, intending in fact to show us that he who had defeated the human race so far could be defeated himself, and to demonstrate to us the method of doing so.[4]

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1 'Tested in every respect' (*per omnia probatus*), a phrase like that in Heb 4:15, *tentatum . . . per omnia* 'in every respect . . . tempted' (RSV), also alluded to in discussion of this passage by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 29 PL 26 305A. While the verb *temptare* (translating πειράζειν) means 'test, make trial of, tempt,' *probare* adds the connotation 'test and find sound or good,' a possible implication of the English 'test' too, especially in passive forms.

2 The importance of one's deliberate investment in spiritual pursuits after baptism is also a theme of the paraphrase on 3:17, 113 and 3:21, 116.

3 'Had completely possessed him' is *a quo totus rapiebatur*; the verb *rapere* is often used in classical Latin for being seized by divine or poetic inspiration, eg in Horace *Odes* 3:1–2 'Whither, Bacchus, do you rush [*rapis*] me, full of you?' or Cicero *De divinatione* 1.111 'those who are impelled [*rapiantur*] with all care and eagerness to learning of things divine.' Erasmus uses the same verb of Mary's absorption in Jesus' teaching in the story of Mary and Martha in chapter 10 277, and at the end of the *Moria*, in his description of ecstatic folly LB IV 520.

4 The two ideas here, that Jesus' move to the desert was a deliberate challenge to Satan and that he was modelling the technique of defeating Satan for us to follow, are common in the exegetical tradition. For the challenge see Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1698D–1700C, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 13 PG 57 208–9, the *Gloss* (on 4:1) quoting Ambrose, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 367A, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 745C–D, and the *Catena aurea* (on 4:2–3) quoting Basil and Ambrose. For the modelling of methods to resist temptation, see Ambrose and Chrysostom just cited, along with Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 528B–C and the *Gloss* (on 4:1).

A place suitable for the tempter was picked, and an opportunity was presented by way of hunger. For in order to reflect Moses in this act, Jesus fasted for forty days, being the one who would bring the new law of the gospel to the world.[5] In that period he touched no food but spent the whole time in holy prayers to God, in divine praises, and in thanksgivings. And this was evidence of an unusual power. He was well aware of the crafts of Satan, who brings in all his snares nowhere more than when he sees a human mind in strenuous effort aiming at heavenly life.[6] Satan had heard that one who would shatter his might was coming, and he was unsure whether he had already come; but he did not know who that one was. For he who had earlier deceived the human race with his tricks had to be deceived himself by divine craft.[7] He had heard John declaring openly, 'I am not the Christ.' Then he had seen many things in Christ that surpassed the limits of human strength; on the other hand, when he saw him famished and physically suffering from lack of food – whereas Moses and Elijah are not said to have been famished after equally long fasts – he supposed that Jesus was no more than a human being, and one who could be corrupted through craft.[8]

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5 For the connection between OT law and gospel law, cf John 1:17 and Rom 3:21–31. The exegetical tradition at this point invokes Moses and Elijah (mentioned below), representatives of the Law and the prophets, and thus in their fasting forerunners of Jesus' forty days; Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1700D–1701A, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 13 PG 57 210, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 366B–C, the *Gloss* (on 4:2) quoting Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 745C–D, and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:2) 153r.

6 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1698D–1701B expounds at length on the snares (*laquei*, as also in Erasmus' text here) of the devil, especially in the case of a person long steeped in godly practice and orthodox belief. The same theme is in Hugh of St Cher (on 4:2 *moraliter*) 156r.

7 For the devil's knowledge of his eventual defeat see Matt 8:29b, cited in this connection by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 367B. For the theme of the deceiver deceived cf Venantius Fortunatus' hymn *Pange lingua gloriosi* stanza 3: 'The due course of our salvation / had demanded such a deed, / that he frustrate by guile the guile / of the assassin many-shaped' (*One Hundred Latin Hymns* trans P.G. Walsh [Cambridge, MA 2012] 97). Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1701B calls Jesus' starving state a *pia fraus* 'pious deception' designed to thwart the master deceiver. Erasmus will develop this theme further below.

8 The Baptist's declaration is at John 1:20. The distinction between Moses and Elijah, who fasted for forty days but were not famished (being fed, some say, on the word of God), and Jesus, who fasted for the same period and was famished, thus showing Satan that he was completely human and presumably fallible, is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1701B, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum*

Now the tempter's clever plan was this: either to overcome him or at least to fish out[9] whether he was the Son of God promised by the prophets. If he found that out for sure, then he would use all his strength and trickery to block the redemption of the human race somehow. But no cunning prevails against divine wisdom, which has arranged all its affairs so as not only to overcome that supremely clever foe of ours but also to outwit him. Wisdom outwitted him by the weakness of the flesh, it outfought him by the strength of the Spirit and the bulwark of divine Scripture, so that he was driven off in shameful defeat and went away no better informed about the Son of God than when he had arrived.[10]

So Satan brought into play the original effective weapon he had deployed against the first of the human race, though he enticed them only with an attractive apple as a lure, while in this case real hunger, an unbearable evil, assisted the tempter's effort. Esau, when driven by hunger, sold his birthright for a lentil stew.[11] Yet our Lord Jesus could have either prevented or dispelled his body's hunger by his divine power, but he chose to throw the bait back at the hunter and trap him instead. The weakness of the human

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PG 57 210, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 745D, and the *Catena aurea* 9 (on 4:2–3) citing Basil. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 367A–B says more bluntly that Jesus was reported to be different from Moses and Elijah in this way to avoid warning his enemy not to tempt him by appearing to be the equal of two men so outstanding in abstinence. Bede is followed by the *Gloss* (on 4:2).

9 'Fish out' is *expiscare*, which literally means just that, with the same metaphorical extension as in English. Note Erasmus' language of bait and being hooked in the next paragraph.

10 The exegetical tradition understands the devil's purpose in this episode as both exploratory – is this individual the promised Son of God? – and hostile – can he be tempted to submit his divinity to the power of diabolical wiles? See eg Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1701C, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 13 PG 57 210–12, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 529A–C, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 32B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 367D quoting Jerome, the *Gloss* (on 4:3) quoting Ambrose; and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:3) 153r. The same exegetes also point out that in a reversal of Satan's expectation Jesus deceives the deceiver by being actually hungry in his human nature and responding in verse 4 strictly as a human. For the theme of God's wisdom and strength consisting in what humans hold as foolishness and weakness, see eg 1 Cor 1:18–25, 2 Cor 12:9 and 13:4.

11 That the case of Adam and Eve is the devil's original temptation by means of an appeal to desire for food (Genesis 3) is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1697D and 1701B, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 210C, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 745D, and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:3) 153r. For Jacob and Esau and the lentil stew (Gen 25:29–34) cf Origen *De principiis* 2.9.7 PG 11 332.

body was thrown out like bait, but it was the tempter who was snagged on the hook of divine might.[12] He saw a human body shrivelling with hunger and in torment, its life in the balance (and they say no death is more painful). He saw him in the desert, far removed from towns and villages where a supply of food could be had. Relying on these facts the godless spirit attacked the Lord Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit; he struck at the one who would defeat him; he challenged one braver, he set a trap for one cannier, than he. 'Why must you be tormented by hunger?' he said; 'If you are the Son of God, command this stone to be turned into bread for you. For a father will not be deaf to his son in danger of starvation.[13] Since God made everything from nothing, it would be nothing much if his Son turned a stone into bread.'

Jesus knew quite well what Satan was driving at. He directed his answer so that he neither fell in with Satan's plan nor betrayed his divine nature to the enemy, who had to be both outwitted and outfought by a novel method, through bodily weakness. He did not deny that the Son of God had the power to turn stones into bread, he did not condemn the easing of bodily hunger with food, but he showed that on the authority of divine Scripture it is the life of the soul that is to be valued more than the body's life, it is spiritual food that is more to be sought than food that briefly prolongs physical life, soon to end in any case, after disease, old age, or some other misfortune. For the food of the spirit bestows eternal life. That food is the word of God. So Jesus outwitted this first assault of the devil with the following answer: 'It is written,' he said, 'in the book of Deuteronomy, "Man does not live by

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12 Cf the imagery of hunting with snares used in the treatment of this passage by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1699D, who speaks of snares (cf n6) and prey *praeda*, and of fishing, an image drawn from Job 40:24 (Vulg 40:19–20), describing the hooking of Behemoth, as also in Gregory of Nyssa *Oratio catechetica magna* 24 PG 45 64B–65A and Gregory of Nazianzus *Oratio* 39 PG 36 349A–B. Note 'fish out' *expiscari* in the preceding paragraph. Jerome *Comm in Job* 40 PL 26 833B has a similar comment, though not so figuratively expressed. The Gregories and Jerome say that the human flesh of Jesus is the prey or bait (or, in Jerome's less vivid wording, that which draws the devil's attention) and equate the hook with divine wisdom or divinity. The theme is taken up again in the Latin tradition by Gregory the Great *Moralia* 33.7.1 PL 76 680B–C commenting on Job 40:24 (Vulg 40:19), who like Erasmus speaks of the bait *esca* of Jesus' human body and the hook of his incarnation that snags the devil. Another treatment in the same vein is in John of Damascus *De fide orthodoxa* PG 94 1096C.

13 Origen *Hom in Lucam* 29 PL 26 305A, quoted in the *Catena aurea* (on 4:4), discussing Jesus' temptations, alludes to the situation of a father who when asked by his son for bread will not give him a stone. Jesus himself invokes this situation in 11:11 and Matt 7:9; see the paraphrases in CWE 48 9 and 45 132.

bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."'[14] Moreover, the Lord relied on the testimony of divine Scripture for this reason: first, to teach us self-restraint, for it does not behove us to affirm anything outside the authority of the Scripture that comes from God; next, he made it clear that we have no more effective weapon against all attacks of godless demons than the authority of Holy Writ.[15] Here is where true food for the soul is to be sought, if anyone wishes to live to God; if anyone does not live to him, though that person seems to be alive, he is dead.[16] Our first parents ate, and they are dead.[17] But if they had answered the tempter as the Lord Jesus answered him, and if the Lord God's commandment, the keeping of which offers eternal life, had meant more to them than desire for the fatal apple, they would not have put themselves and their descendants in thrall to death. Indeed, that model provided by the Saviour also teaches us that no miracle is to be done except when the glory of Christ, not human lust, demands or when brotherly love requires. For to work wonders, or to fake them, for empty show and the novelty-seeking pleasure of the spectators is what magicians and illusionists do; and from that the glory of God does not shine forth, nor does any good redound to one's neighbour – such as when a burning torch plunged into water is not extinguished, or when a horrifying vision of Hector or Achilles is brought before our eyes, or when a straw appears to crawl along like a serpent.[18] Jesus never did any miracle except

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14 Deut 8:3. The Vulgate in Deuteronomy and in this Luke passage (which reads identically with the parallel in Matt 4:4, not as modern texts read) has *verbum* for 'word.' Erasmus changes *verbum* to *sermo*, the same, much disputed, alteration he had made in his revision of the Vulgate translation of John 1:1; see chapter 1 n10. Just above, in 'that food is the word of God,' 'word' is also *sermo*.

15 The lessons Christians are to draw from Jesus' quotation, lessons about the sufficiency and effectiveness of Scripture in the ongoing battle against Satan, are pointed out by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 29 PL 26 306A, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1702A, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 748A, and the *Catena aurea* (on 4:4) quoting Ambrose.

16 Cf Rom 6:11.

17 Cf John 6:58; but here Erasmus changes John's text *patres* 'fathers, ancestors' to *primi parentes* 'our first parents,' thus picking up the theme of Adam and Eve that he had developed since the end of chapter 3. See the paraphrases on 3:38, 123 and on 4:3, 127, with their notes.

18 Erasmus' list of wonders performed by magicians (*magi*) and illusionists (*praestigiatores*) seems to rely on two sources: for the inextinguishable torches, Livy's account (39.13.8) of the worshippers of Bacchus accused of conspiracy in Rome in the early second century BC, where such torches were part of the mystic rites. The torches, Livy says, had been treated with a sulphur-lime combination. The other two examples may be Erasmus' particularization of two out of several

when at one and the same time his Father's power would be displayed and some human need met, or when, circumstances permitting, human disbelief would be challenged. When crowds of people needed to be fed, he multiplied a few loaves into a supply sufficient for many thousands. Far from deigning to feed Herod's eyes on a miracle, he did not even deign to address him.[19] On the same plan, clearly, he refused Satan a miracle.

Defeated in this encounter, the devil did not promptly stand down from the conflict, lest we, winners on a single occasion, surrender to carelessness; but [he persisted] so that we would keep up a spirit ever prepared against new attacks. Those who have progressed to the middle stages of the gospel philosophy easily scorn the disease of gluttony and extravagance as base and animal-like.[20] Yet even in this temptation a snare for arrogance was not lacking: 'if you are the Son of God.' For those who are arrogant by nature and desirous of glory often try for things beyond their strength, so as not to damage their reputations, and in their chase for glory among mortals they falsely lay claim to what they do not have. In this way many arrogate to themselves by means of tricks the gift of prophecy, a gift they do not have; in

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methods used by wonder workers to get money from the gullible, cited in a quotation from Celsus in Origen *Contra Celsum* 1:68 PG 11 788A–B: 'calling up spirits of heroes' and 'making things that aren't really alive appear to move like living creatures.'

19 For the pedagogical functions of Jesus' miracles, see eg the paraphrases on Matt 4:23–4, 8:1, 10:8, and 15:39 CWE 45 82, 140, 167, and 240 respectively; and on John 2:5 and 15:20 CWE 46 39 and 182. Accounts of the feeding of thousands are found in this Gospel at 9:10–17 and in Matt 14:13–21, Mark 6:35–44 and 8:1–9, and John 6:1–13. For Jesus' refusal to indulge Herod's curiosity, see 23:6–10 and its paraphrase CWE 48 210–11.

20 Erasmus will mention 'gospel philosophy' at 161 in the paraphrase on verse 42. See also chapter 1 n16.
Here at the end of his account of the first temptation Erasmus uses *gula* 'gluttony' to describe the category of sin the devil is employing. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1701B–C had said at the outset of his remarks that the devil's three main weapons are *gula*, *iactantia* 'boastfulness,' and *ambitio* 'self-seeking, ambition'; his comments on the second two temptations follow the order of Matt 4:5–10, where Jesus is urged to throw himself down (ie tempted by *iactantia*) before being offered power over worldly kingdoms (ie tempted by *ambitio*). 'Extravagance' is *luxus*, a general term not restricted to sexual desire (Ambrose here has the related *luxuria*); see CWE 48 77 n21. The division into these categories, sometimes differently named, appears also in the interlinear *Gloss* (on 4:3 and 5), the marginal *Gloss* (on 4:5), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 745D–748A, and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:3, 5–6, and 9).

this way many boast of angelic visions they have not seen.[21] In contrast, our Lord Jesus, though he was the greatest of all, cloaked his greatness, displaying his bodily weakness, and he never exhibited his power except when it was for the benefit of human salvation, so that the glory of the Father might shine forth through the Son.

So Satan, relentlessly malicious as he is, went for Jesus with the same weapon but on a different basis, trying whether he could be corrupted by the wealth and power of this world, since he could not be tripped up by hunger. Ambition is indeed a deadly evil and almost invincible; it creeps up on even the loftiest virtues, insinuating itself into minds that are striving to scale the heights. It is so damaging that the drive for glory throws down and flattens those whom neither adversity nor poverty nor disease could break, nor luxury nor sexual appetite could weaken. For what is there so criminal or so ungodly that mortals will not either do or endure it for the sake of power? Is kingship not regularly purchased by poison, parricide, incestuous marriage, and other unmentionable wrongs? By how many murders, often enough, is control of a single state claimed? High office is sweet, command is glorious, excelling others is magnificent. And altogether kingship seems to be a kind of divine estate among mortals. Our first parents were caught with this appealing poison. The enticement of a tempting apple charmed their eyes, but what charmed their spirit more was the exaltation of the falsely promised knowledge and the rank equal to gods.[22]

So the tempter assaulted Jesus with this siege engine, and Jesus did not flee from the tempter's persistence because he wanted to defeat him for us and to show us the method of defeating him. The devil therefore took Jesus up to a high mountain, and from it as from a watchtower,[23] in an instant of time, he spread before his eyes all the kingdoms of the whole world – an unholy spirit can, with God's permission, represent in a strange way images of things to human eyes – and at the same moment he put before his eyes by a

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21 False prophets: Deut 13:1–5, Matt 7:15 and 24:24, Acts 13:6; false boasts of angelic visions: Jer 14:14, 23:16 and 32.

22 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1704A–1705C describes *ambitio* as a danger in the achievement of every worldly rank and likely to tempt even those who are indifferent to the kinds of sin classed under gluttony and extravagance, for while power itself is a gift of God, its actual use in worldly terms is subject to the devil. Even Adam and Eve, he says (1706A–B), though initially tempted by the offered food, were in fact more tempted by the prospect of becoming godlike (Gen 3:4–5). Ambrose's observations are cited by the *Gloss* (on 4:6).

23 For the connotations of a watchtower see the paraphrase on 19:40 CWE 48 152 with n59.

sort of illusion every magnificence in the world that the uproar around great kings contains: riches, households of servants, palaces, troops, trumpets, processions, triumphs, delegations, unconstrained exercise of power, and the multitudinous other ways in which the adulation of peoples reveres mortal princes as gods and looks up to them, often stupid and godless, surely frail and soon to die though they are; and princes themselves, carried away by the course of fickle events, think that they are more than gods. In a flash the illusionist cast a kind of marvellous spectacle of all these things before the eyes of our Lord Jesus, who cannot be deceived by any illusion, since nothing is hidden from him.[24]

To this magnificent sight Satan the liar and evil one added a more magnificent speech: 'All these things, so splendid, so rich, so magnificent, have been given into my power to bestow on whomever I please. For I am the prince and god of this world. But if you acknowledge my divinity and fall at my knees and worship me, I will put into your hands total power over all the kingdoms you see. Do you see how great Caesar's name is everywhere, and how large a part of the world acknowledges him as Lord? You alone will possess it all, and you will be revered as a god on earth, provided you acknowledge me as the author of so much good fortune.' You recognize, pious reader, the utterly false and arrogant voice of him who once said to our unhappy first parents, 'You shall not die, but you shall be like gods, knowing good and evil.'[25]

At this our Lord Jesus rejected Satan's godless speech with the words of Holy Scripture, saying, 'Begone, Satan, with your deceiving promises! It is a ruinous gain that is purchased at the price of godliness. The condition you set is ungodly, the promise you make is empty. For it is written in Deuteronomy, "You shall bow down to the Lord your God and him only shall you worship."[26] God does not permit his glory to be transferred to another; he does not permit it to be shared between himself and anyone. He is the

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24 That the view is illusionistic, rather than a panorama of world geography, is pointed out by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 30 PL 26 307B, who says the view is of the thousands ruled by sin; the thought is repeated in the *Gloss* (on 4:5). Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 748A rejects an interpretation that the devil produces the sight via a rational thought process (διάνοια) and says rather that he made it perceptible in an illusion (φαντασία). 'Spectacle' is *theatrum* in Erasmus' Latin, a transliterated Greek word that like its original can mean 'spectacle' rather than 'theatre [building].'

25 Cf Gen 3:4–5; see n22.

26 Deut 5:9 and 6:13. It is the latter passage that contains the version closest to Luke's text. But Erasmus here prefers to say 'him only shall you worship [*coles*],'

true God and Lord of all things that are in heaven or on earth. He promises his worshippers inheritance of the heavenly kingdom. His voice is more to be obeyed than yours, for though you wickedly demand for yourself the honour owed to God alone, you are promising not only vain things soon to perish but also the possessions of another.'[27]

The Lord Jesus could have replied, 'Why are you promising me things that are my own? With what effrontery do you demand that I fall on my knees when I am the God who made you, who threw you and your pride out of heaven and will throw you down into hell as soon as I see fit? You would have no right in these very kingdoms if the straying and sinfulness of mortals did not create it for you. Your power rests on their foolishness. Suppose true godliness revives; then where would your kingdom be?' But at this time Satan had to be deceived, not instructed. Nor did he deserve to be warned since he could not be corrected. This play was being acted for our benefit; we were being instructed that anything connected with godlessness has to be wholeheartedly rejected. It is not that wealth or a kingdom or public office is in itself evil, but that hardly anyone gets as far as these except by evil means, and they are held only at grave risk to one's duty to God because they are subject to countless dangers. Furthermore, anyone who is corrupted by lust for these things and neglects God's commandments, who defrauds, steals, swears falsely, kills, confounds right and wrong – that one has already worshipped the prince of this world and denied God, since he has made a contract with God's adversary. Then whenever a Christian's heart is stirred to abandon truth and commit impiety in return for increasing wealth or the possession of power or the purchase of glory and the door is opened to godlessness, on the model of Christ his guide let him fearlessly reply, 'Satan, get away from me with your false promises; only God is to be worshipped.[28] Whoever has God's favour is together with God the master of all things.'

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the verb found in a different context in the Vulgate of Deut 5:9, instead of the *servies* 'shall you serve' in the Vulgate of Luke 4:8.

27 Here and in the next paragraph, Erasmus expands on some of the content of the Decalogue and the fact that the devil offers what is not his to bestow but actually belongs to the person he is addressing, as well as on the misuse of power. These are important themes also in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1704B–C, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 529D–532B, and the *Gloss* (on 4:6) following Ambrose.

28 'Get away from me' is *abi*, a Latin imperative that has the colloquial force 'Get out of here!' 'Go and be damned!' See L&S at *abeo* II B4. The version of Jesus' refusal in Matt 4:10 is *vade* 'Go!' and in some texts adds the phrase 'behind me,' as at Matt 16:23. In Luke's text, as Erasmus had said in the annotation *scriptum est* (on 4:8), while neither the short nor long version of the command in Matthew

Not even when repulsed in this way did Satan's wickedness give up offering temptation. He tried again, having to be defeated more than once, so we would understand that in this life the struggle with our adversary is never-ending, and there is nothing so criminal that he does not dare to tempt God's worshippers to it. But he is not to be feared by the godly, for whom Jesus Christ has already won the victory, and for whom very effective weapons are supplied from Holy Writ with which the relentless tempter may be beaten back on the spot.[29] And indeed he accomplishes nothing other by his tempting than, when the opportunity presents itself, rendering the virtue of good people greater and more respected.

So he led Jesus down from the high mountain to Jerusalem, and set him on the highest peak of the temple, and again challenged him either to throw himself headlong and die, conquered by empty glory, or by that sign to reveal that he was the Son of God. And Satan borrowed support for his trick from Holy Writ, but wrongly understood and not applied as it ought to be. Indeed heretics and the ungodly often misuse divine Scripture in this way and deceive the incautious, distorting the standard of the divine word to suit their own inclinations. 'Make it plain right here,' he said, 'whether you are the Son of God or not. Throw yourself headlong, and if nothing bad happens, it will be evident to everyone that you are the Son of God. And there is no danger that anything will happen. For in the Psalms it is written about the Son of God, "He shall give his angels charge over you, to preserve you and lift you up in their hands lest you dash your foot against a stone."'[30] This prophecy is made not specifically about Christ but about any godly person who, trusting in divine aid, ought not be afraid for himself about any of the

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was in the Latin manuscripts of Luke, 'behind me' was in some Greek ones. He specifically mentioned Theophylact (see *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 745B) but here chooses a more vivid Latin expression than the Vulgate's *vade*.

'To be worshipped' translates *adorandus*, a form of the verb *adorare* used in Deut 5:9 Vulg and generally translated 'bow down'; the same verb appears in the Latin text of 4:8. See n26 above.

29 For the theme of the persistence of temptation and the modelling of the means to resist it, see Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1700C and 1701C, Chrysostom *Hom in Matt* 13 PG 57 207–9, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 532B, and Gregory the Great *Moralia* 21 PL 76 301C–D; see also n15 above.

30 In this quotation of Ps 91:11, LB prints *mandavit* 'he has given . . . charge,' the perfect tense, but the lifetime editions of the *Paraphrase* read the future tense, *mandabit*. Erasmus was familiar with the Vulgate practice, following the Hebrew, of using the perfect tense to refer to future time in prophetic speech; see the paraphrases on 1:55, 57 with n107 and 1:79, 66 with n128.

ills of this world, just as the Lord himself bade his apostles to be of good cheer, for not a hair of their head would perish without the consent of their Father in heaven.[31]

But Jesus, for now hiding the fact that by nature he was the Son of God, gave only the answer that could be made by any godly person, and rebutted the falsely cited scripture with another scripture correctly applied, like one nail pounding out another.[32] 'But on the contrary,' he said, 'it is written in Deuteronomy: "You shall not tempt the Lord your God" [6:16]. His aid will be there when some mishap or religious scruple puts you in danger, not when you call on God's might for show. Divine power does not serve human glory or lust; but declaring its own glory among humankind when it chooses, it assists those devoid of human aid. Besides, one who voluntarily hurls himself into clear mortal danger for his own glory's sake is unworthy of divine help.[33] Nor is it the business of godly men to prescribe to God when or how he must rescue us from danger, since we are sure that whether he frees us or not, what is done with his consent is most salutary for us. Sometimes it is more blessed to be ill than to be well; to die than to live; to suffer than to enjoy good fortune. To depend on him with singleness of heart is godliness;

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31 The application of Ps 91:11 is to any Christian believer, not to Jesus, who needs no help from angels, according to Origen *Hom in Lucam* 31 PL 26 310C–311D, arguing that heretics like Marcion and Valentius also use the devil's interpretation; Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1703B–C makes a similar point in more general terms, as do Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 32D, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 13 PG 57 212, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 533D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 369B following Jerome, and the *Catena aurea* (on 4:9–13) citing Chrysostom. For divine protection even for the hairs of the head, see 12:7 and 21:18, Matt 10:30, Acts 27:34.

32 For 'one nail pounding out another' see *Adagia* I ii 4 *Clavum clavo pellere*; here Erasmus uses the verb *retundere* 'pound' rather than *pellere* 'drive.'

33 The view suggested here, that the meaning of Ps 91:11 does not imply an expectation of God's assistance whenever Christians might happen to ask for it, is briefly expressed by Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 13 PG 57 212 and by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 369C–D in a long quotation from Augustine *Contra Faustum* 22.36 PL 42 423, which points out that even Jesus himself did not employ his divine powers to escape death threats and general hostility but in his episodes of fleeing and hiding, and even his death at the time appointed, instructed his followers' human weakness not to test God, but to use trickery or evasive action as he had. Hugh of St Cher (on 4:12 *moraliter*) 154r gives as an example of testing God someone who refuses to leave his burning house, saying, 'I'll wait and see if God wants to save me.'

to test what he can do out of human curiosity is ungodly. For he can do all things, but he chooses to do only the best things.'

In these and other ways our Prince and teacher Jesus allowed himself to be tested by Satan soon after his baptism, lest we think it enough that by the washing of baptism our sins have been forgiven; he wanted to show us that we must undertake a fierce war with an enemy who will make every effort to draw us back into our earlier slavery. In baptism we enlist with our commander, to go to war under his banner against the forces of Satan. And our business is not with human beings, since Christ bids us to love even our enemies, but with unholy spirits, who attack us from on high with fiery weapons and much craft. But our Prince has broken their might once, and then handed them over, no longer invincible, to us; he will defeat them again in us, provided that we imitate the method of fighting that Christ used on them.[34] Moreover, sometimes they attack us directly, putting godless thoughts in our minds; sometimes through wicked mortals as their henchmen, when they suborn those who tempt us to pleasure or provoke us through quarrels and insults to rage and murder. Sometimes they get bait to trap us from this world, whose honours, offices, riches, and processions they press upon our sight; sometimes they also take it from our own selves. For in us there are certain natural dispositions that we are not able to discard, unless of course we strip off human nature, such as the appetite for food and drink and the desire for sexual activity, once adolescence has enlarged our reproductive parts with fluids. Still, it is no crime to come together with one's wife in moderation; nor is it wrong to check hunger and thirst with food and drink. But here our cunning enemy lays traps for us, so that we indulge these dispositions more than is necessary, or we satisfy them in ways that are improper. For instance, if someone lays hands on another man's wife, or comes together with his own excessively often or in indecent ways; or if he eats food sacrificed to idols with offence to his brother when it is possible to avoid causing offence and still provide for the body's needs.[35] Besides,

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34 Erasmus renews the military metaphor he had begun in chapter 2; see 68. The language of war against sin and the devil, and of the weapons of Christ, is quite widespread from NT times on; especially noticeable is the idea, repeated here, that Christ conquered once and now expects his followers to continue the fight using his weapons and tactics. See eg Rom 13:12–14, 2 Cor 6:7, Eph 6:11–17, Origen *Hom in Lucam* 29 PL 26 305A, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1701B–1702A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 371A citing Matt 6:1–6 and 16–18, the *Catena aurea* (on 4:9–13) citing Chrysostom, and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:3) 153r.

35 Erasmus' description of natural dispositions appears to echo such specific passages of Paul as Rom 1:26–8 and 1 Cor 5:1 (for sexual offences; see also Leviticus

there are also individual physical and mental propensities for specific faults, either because these are in us from our parents or have accumulated by force of habit, or have come from some other source. So one person is naturally more inclined to greed, another to extravagance, another to sexual appetite, another to anger, another to ambition. Our enemy notes each of these, so that he may draw us into destruction.[36] But against all these traps of his we must be both strong and watchful. Against all his devices the spirit of Christ will supply strength and intelligence; divine Scripture will supply weapons. He who allows us to be tempted will not allow us to be defeated but will so direct the conflict that the outcome of the struggle will be to our benefit.[37] The conquered enemy will not cease envying, but someday he will cease attacking; and the more often he repeats his attack, the more broken will he be when he comes back.

Christ expressed in himself how things would be for us. When the devil unleashed all his crafts against the Lord and made no progress, he departed both defeated and outwitted, but only for a time, certain to seize another opportunity and return to his testing. For after he was unable to tease out a declaration that Jesus was the Son of God, whom he could not corrupt by any illusory appearance of things, he later tried to kill him through his henchmen, the Pharisees, scribes, and priests. Yet here too by divine craft Jesus outwitted his opponent's cunning. What the one put into play for destruction the other turned to salvation for us.[38] And then at last Satan realized that his tyranny was crushed, though he had promised himself certain victory. Baptism came first, which confers innocence. The desert came next, and constant prayer, fasting, and now confrontation with Satan, against whom we are best armed by avoidance of the multitudes, in which everything is present that entices

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20 and related OT passages) and 1 Cor 8:1–13 and 10:23–30 (for eating food sacrificed to idols). On the call for moderation and propriety in marital relations, see his *Institutio christiani matrimonii* (1526) CWE 69 387.

36 That innate individual characteristics may determine the susceptibility to one class of sin or another seems to be Erasmus' own contribution, but see Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1707D–1708C, who notes that Satan's armoury can assault a person in mind and body depending on what the person's circumstances are; Ambrose alludes particularly to Job.

37 Cf 1 Cor 10:13, where Paul assures believers that God will not let them be tested beyond their strength.

38 A renewal of Ambrose's and Erasmus' theme at the beginning of this episode, that Jesus deceives the deceiver by presenting only his human nature to the challenges of opposition and execution. See 127 with n10; also Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1699C–D and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:3) 153r.

weak hearts to sin. Prayer fortifies, and fasting takes strength from the body and adds it to the spirit.[39]

It remained for him to be equipped for the task of teaching. This, moreover, is the particular task of bishops, which no one rightly takes up unless he is a thoroughly tried and tested victor over all evil desires that corrupt and weaken the word of God, so that he can teach others also how to resist Satan. For it is not enough for a gospel teacher to be free from faults; but he must be both strong and incorruptible, so that not profit nor any bodily pleasure nor self-seeking nor fear will turn him from the straight path of gospel truth, though Satan will never cease attacking it through those who love this world more than the glory of God.

Our Lord Jesus wanted to teach us this. So when all the foregoing events had been completed, and being now in the great power of the Spirit with which he was filled, he went to Galilee. He had certainly gathered strength of spirit from the tempting, not because any new power had been bestowed on him but because what he had in his heart was now emerging and asserting itself.[40] At the same time he was portraying for us what a gospel teacher must tend to and must expect. He wanted to begin his gospel preaching from Galilee, the most scorned region of Judea, partly to correspond to the prophecy of Isaiah, where it was said concerning 'the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali,' that is, close to Galilee of the gentiles, the light of divine truth would arise; and partly so no progress would be credited to the resources of this world if the gospel were promulgated through the learned or the wealthy or the powerful, or if it arose from a famous area.[41] For God chose all that is despised in the world's view so that the entire glory of such an amazing

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39 The exegetical tradition has variant comments on the tools of spiritual strengthening modelled in the events of Jesus' baptism and desert experience. Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 13 PG 57 209 and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 745C–D point out that temptation comes to believers chiefly when they are alone and not in crowds. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 366B regards going to the desert after baptism as a way to become better equipped against the ancient foe's ambushes by mentally separating from the world and learning to hunger for the joys of eternal life. Bede is followed by the *Gloss* (on 4:1 and 2) and by Nicholas of Lyra (on 4:1), who emphasizes the importance of such preparation for the preacher.

40 Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 536A–B likewise specifies at this point that Jesus had not received additional powers from his desert experience but is using what was already his own and also belongs to the consubstantial Spirit.

41 The prophecy, here in paraphrased form, from Isa 9:1–2 RSV appears more fully at Matt 4:15–16, where it is placed after the report of Jesus' move from Nazareth to Capernaum, and after the report that John the Baptist was in prison (Matt

event would redound to him. Furthermore, Jesus' reputation was already well established among the Galileans, to whom he had become known even before his baptism, by some miracles privately done and by gathering a few disciples whom he wanted to be witnesses of his whole life and teaching.[42] At this time he gradually withdrew from ties with his relatives, teaching that even these often stand in the way of wholeheartedness in teaching.[43] Moreover, once John had been put in chains (for while John was preaching,[44] Jesus had been virtually silent, lest any rivalry arise between the disciples of the two of them), he openly began the business of preaching with great purposefulness. For it was time for the Law, of which John was a symbol, to shrink and for gospel freedom to assert itself. A prison suits a shadow-filled Law, dark with puzzling statements. But the gospel light had to be raised on high so that it was visible to all parts of the world, great and small, learned and unlettered. Therefore, as soon as the Lord returned to Galilee, in the power of the divine Spirit with which he was filled and which was already revealed in part by miracles and teaching, the report about him that had already circulated among a few was then publicized throughout the entire region. For a well-known name is fitting for a gospel teacher, not because he is expected to be garnering glory among humankind but because the teacher's honourable reputation wins him trust and respect. Yet this reputation, as it is not to be actively sought for, also is not to be gained by just any methods. Let

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4:12, Mark 1:14). Like Erasmus, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1709B cites the prophecy at the outset of his discussion of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth.

42 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 371B–372A has two points that Erasmus also makes: that Jesus exhibited his powers in private actions and teaching before the formal beginning of his ministry, and that he thus established a reputation in Galilee that gave him credibility among people in general and brought him some disciples (cf John 1:40–51). Bede cites the events of John 2 and argues on the basis of John 3:22–4 that these early evidences of Jesus' future mission must have taken place in the interval after the desert experience but before the imprisonment of the Baptist – an interval omitted by Matthew and Mark, and mentioned by Luke only summarily in 4:14–15. Bede is followed by the *Gloss* (on 4:14–15) and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:14) 154r.

43 For Jesus' modelling withdrawal from family ties for the would-be preacher, see John 2:4 and 12, with the paraphrases on them, CWE 46 38–9 and 41.

44 'Preaching' *praedicante* is the reading of all the lifetime editions consulted; LB VII 323F prints instead *praecedente* 'coming first, preceding.' For the interpretation that Jesus avoided rivalry with the preaching mission of the Baptist, see Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 14 PG 57 217–18, though he also notes that jealousy between the respective sets of disciples occurred anyway; see John 3:24–5 with its paraphrase CWE 46 50–1.

the teacher live according to Jesus' example so that, though he does not brag about himself, he still has been recommended by the testimony of the Father, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the support of a John – that is, of all good people. Let him so live that he turns the eyes of everyone to himself by the uprightness of his character.[45] Then let his trust in God be such that he may, if circumstances require, even glorify God with miracles. Yet in these times it is quite miracle enough not to be distracted even a little from the uprightness of gospel truth by riches or pleasures or honours or threats of torture or fear of death.

Now among the Jews there was a custom of frequent gathering in the temple or the synagogue, especially on sabbaths and holy days, not to spend the respite from sordid everyday labours that was enjoined on them by the Law in gaming, whoring, drinking, quarrels, and other kinds of misbehaviour, but to employ it on things of the spirit. The conversation there was not about human trifles but about the Law of the Lord, about the coming Messiah, who was looked for by all the godly in fervent prayers.[46] And each contributed what he could, no matter his station in life. So to anyone who asserted that he had something to teach the people, the book of the divine Law was given, on which, and not on human fantasies, the gospel teacher is bound to feed the hearts of the congregation. Whatever was said or done on this occasion, moreover, could not be a secret because a mixed crowd of people was gathered there. So since Jesus wanted his teaching to be known to all and was walking throughout the towns of Galilee, he would, according to the praiseworthy custom of the Jews, visit their synagogues regular-

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45 'Uprightness of his character' (*morum integritate*). Cf chapter 3 n19. *Integritas* is a moral quality often mentioned by Cicero, among others; see eg his *Pro lege Manilia* 68.13, *Pro Murena* 41.11, *Pro Sulla* 79.5, *Brutus* 265.7, and especially *De amicitia* 19.3, the description of a man admired for trustworthiness, uprightness, fairness, and generosity. Cf n85.

46 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 372D–373A comments that, according to the Lord's commandment to 'be still and know that I am God' (Ps 46:10), on the sabbath Jews would leave off their worldly activities and sit still with quiet hearts to meditate on the Law. He adds that traces of such worship remain in some places in the church of his own day, in the use of the canticle at Deut 32:1–43 on the sabbath. His first comment is echoed by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 4:16) without the psalm reference. Hugh of St Cher (on 4:16) 154V says that Jesus modelled leaving work aside on festival days for the purposes of prayer, preaching, and other divine services, but that in Jesus' day many put work aside for drinking and parties. Nicholas of Lyra (on 4:15), like the *Gloss* but even more briefly, echoes Bede on the synagogue as a place of prayer and teaching of the Law, following the Law's commandments about no work on the sabbath.

ly. Everywhere he would offer that wonderful and potent teaching about the kingdom of heaven, as much more powerful than the teaching of the Pharisees (who preached the husk of the Law or else petty human institutions) as wine is more potent than water. Even among the Galileans there was no shortage of hearts that could be taught, hearts to marvel at this new kind of teaching, to look up to the wonderful teacher and sing his praises.

To this extent, then, the gospel business was a success, until it got as far as his relatives and his hometown reputation. The point here was for us to understand that the teacher of heavenly matters must, as much as possible, be a stranger to the flesh, a stranger to blood ties.[47] For having journeyed through several hamlets and towns of Galilee, at last he came to Nazareth, where he was believed by many to have been born because he had been brought up there and had lived there for a long time with his parents and relatives. For the same reason he was commonly called a Nazarene. So to avoid the possible complaint that he disdained his birthplace and his own people and preferred to hunt for glory among strangers, he came here too, by this time marked with a reputation he had not had in his own town. And to make it clear that he had renounced family business, he came in his usual way to the town synagogue. For there is no better place for one dedicated to the people's welfare to be. When he had listened to others discussing the Law, he too rose, indicating by this gesture that he too was moved by the Spirit and had something he wished to say to the congregation. This custom of speaking and listening in turn is still practised in churches today, according to the institution of Paul; and if something worth learning is revealed to anyone, the preceding speaker yields and makes way for his successor,[48] lest

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47 The point Erasmus identifies here is not emphasized in the Latin tradition, though often found in other places in his *Paraphrases* and justifiable by what happens later in this episode and by such passages as 2:48–9 and 8:19–21, Matt 13:57, Mark 6:4, and John 2:1–4 and 4:44. But Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 536B and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 750B both comment on Jesus' teaching and benefiting his own people first, and then moving out to extend his circle to others; both Greeks are cited in the *Catena aurea* (on 4:16).

48 The practice of taking turns in addressing the congregation 'today,' ie in the time of the putative narrator Luke, is mentioned in 1 Cor 14:26–33, a chapter that generally addresses the orderly conduct of church meetings. The interlinear *Gloss* (on 4:16), commenting on 'he rose,' approximately quotes 1 Cor 14:30 'If there has been a revelation to a younger person, let the older one be silent.' Hugh of St Cher (on 4:16) 154v quotes this remark from the *Gloss* and adds that it means Jesus rose, and the one who was reading 'made way for him' *dedit ei locum*, the same idiom Erasmus uses here.

tumult and confusion arise in the holy gathering, where everything is to be done in conformity with peace and tranquillity.

The book was given to Jesus, as was the custom, to teach us what must be the source of salutary teaching: that is, not from human comments, not from philosophers' principles, but from the sacred pages that have been given to us by the inspiration of the divine Spirit. The Lord Jesus did not need the book since all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom were contained within him. But he took the book to commend to us zeal for sacred reading. The synagogue attendant handed him the book, but closed; Jesus, who alone has the key and reveals what is contained in the Old Law, took the book, opened it, and unrolled its pages. For Jesus himself was hidden there, stored up and concealed in the Law.[49] What is more, it was fitting that the Jews themselves hand over that from which they would soon be confuted. For not just any book was given to him, but the prophet Isaiah, the one who most clearly and plainly prophesied about Christ and the gospel teaching. Nor did that occur by chance; but by divine providence when he unrolled the opened scroll, the very passage happened to come to hand that most clearly foretells Christ, and in which Christ himself speaks about himself through the mouth of the prophet, thus: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me so that I may bring happy news to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim release to the captives and sight to the blind, let the broken go free, proclaim the acceptable and desirable year of the Lord and the day of retribution.'[50]

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49 Jesus' action in opening the text is intended to demonstrate the truth that he himself is the one prophesied by all the OT prophets, according to Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1709C, followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 373A, who adds a reference to Jesus' own words and action at 24:44–5. Both are cited in the *Gloss* (on 4:16 and 17), quoted in turn by Hugh of St Cher (on 4:17) 154V. Erasmus' conviction that Jesus is more alive in the pages of Scripture than even during his mortal life is expressed perhaps most clearly at the end of his *Paraclesis* LB V 144C–D, but see also the paraphrases on John 14:13 CWE 46 170 and on Luke 19:4 CWE 48 134 and 24:44–5 CWE 48 277, and his passionate plea for Scripture reading among all classes of people in all languages in the preface *Pio lectori* 'To the pious reader' in the *Paraphrase on Matthew* CWE 45 7–28, especially 7–19. See also 143–4 just below, the end of the paraphrase on verse 20.

50 In reporting Luke's prophecy from Isaiah, which in the Vulgate version of Erasmus' day combined parts of Isa 61:1–2, 58:6, and 29:18, he makes a few grammatical and semantic changes but otherwise leaves his paraphrasing for Jesus' own words in verse 21. The grammatical changes are generally in the direction of classical Latin and / or the Vulgate Isaiah rather than the Vulgate Luke. Changes in vocabulary are the replacement of the Latinized Greek verb

When our Lord Jesus had stood and read these words aloud in his own voice, he rolled up the book and handed it back to the attendant as he had received it. In this act he symbolized the stubborn unbelief of certain Jews who, attending to the letter of the Law, neither understood nor recognized Christ, the soul of the Law. Now he took the part of a teacher and sat down to explain what he had read. That he stood to read was owed to the authority of divine Scripture, before which it behoves every human rank to rise; that he sat to teach makes it clear that the interpreter of divine Scripture should be free from the tumult of all human desires.[51] What is more, the recent talk that had already begun to appear here and there, and the teaching authority now for the first time taken up, and finally a sort of heavenly grace radiating from his countenance caused the eyes of one and all present in that congregation to be fastened on him. Indeed, the Lord Jesus loves such an audience, who spend the sabbath resting from the tumultuous desires of this world, who gather together in mutual harmony, who have mental eyes looking nowhere but to Jesus, to eternal salvation. For he speaks to us every day

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evangelizare by *laetum nuntium adferre* 'bring happy news'; the replacement of *dimittere in remissionem confractos* 'to set at liberty them that are bruised' (AV and DV) with *confractos dimittam liberos* 'let the broken go free'; and the addition of *et optabilem* 'and desirable' to *annum Domini acceptum* 'the acceptable year of the Lord.'

Erasmus includes 'and the day of retribution' (from Isa 61:2b; 'the day of reward' DV) though modern texts do not. Valla *Annot in Lucam* had noted that the phrase did not appear in his Greek texts and was inappropriate anyway, since only grace, not retribution, was pertinent to this prophecy. In a *1516* annotation *et diem retributionis* Erasmus noted the same absence in Greek texts and added that Jerome also omitted it in his discussion of the Isaiah passage; see *Commentarii in Isaiam* PL 24 598C; in *1522* he added that it is inconsistent with 'let the broken go free.' For modern discussion of the text of 4:18–19 and its sources in Isaiah, see Fitzmyer AB Luke 532–3 and Nestle-Aland on this passage.

51 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 374C notes that standing to read is appropriate because it is the posture of one who is working, and sitting afterwards is the posture of one resting or passing judgment, though he favours resting here since Jesus has handed the book to the attendant, ie symbolically has passed on his work to his followers. This view is repeated in the *Gloss* (on 4:20) and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:20) 155v with some elaborations, including Hugh's observation that standing to read is the action of a student, not a teacher, though he agrees that sitting is a posture of rest. Nicholas of Lyra (on 4:20), like Erasmus, says that Jesus sits as a teacher before his pupils: 'He sat to expound in good time what he had read reverently and devoutly while standing.' Sitting is the typical posture of teachers in antiquity and of Jesus in other teaching situations; eg 5:3 and its paraphrase, 164, 5:17 and its paraphrase, 175, with the paraphrase on 8:4, 233; Matt 13:1–2 and 26:55, Mark 4:1 and 9:25, John 8:2.

in Sacred Scripture. He speaks through gospel prophets, that is, interpreters of the sacred texts. Happy are they to whom, attending so closely, the Lord Jesus speaks. For to such he deigns to open the mystery of hidden meaning.

For as soon as he saw that the eyes of all had turned and fixed on him alone, he began to say to them,[52] 'You have heard Isaiah, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, promising you an extraordinary and mighty teacher, who will not teach human or useless tales in a human spirit, but who is to be sent from God fully anointed and awash in the divine Spirit[53] to bring the happy and desirable news of salvation to those who are meek and poor in spirit and therefore fit for the salvific lesson.[54] And he will be able to make good on his promises, since he will be endowed with heavenly power, and will freely bring salvation to all who feel the weight of their wrongdoing and long for salvation; he will freely forgive all sins and heal those who have hearts corrupted by various diseases of vices and evil desires.[55] He will preach liberty to all, whether they are committed to idol worship and held captive by the

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52 Here Erasmus begins the paraphrase on 4:18–19, cast as Jesus' own words in elaboration of the single sentence reported in 4:20: 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 373A–B remarks that Luke begins his account of the Lord's deeds with Jesus reading and explaining the prophecies concerning himself, as he will do again at the end of his mission, 24:44–5. Cf also Erasmus' treatment of 24:27 CWE 48 234–70.

53 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1709C, commenting on the involvement of all three Persons of the Trinity at Jesus' baptism, says that Jesus was anointed with spiritual oil and celestial power; Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 373C–D says the same and more strongly makes the point that the spiritual anointing was completed in the baptism and descent of the dove. Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 537A also identifies the dove as a sign of Jesus' spiritual anointing in so far as he was human – a quality not of flesh but of mind (νοητόν) that enables the weak and ignorant to see. Ambrose and Bede are followed by the *Gloss* (on 4:18); Cyril and Ambrose are cited in the *Catena aurea* (on 4:18).

54 In 'bring the happy and desirable news of salvation' (*laetum et optabile adferret nuntium salutis*) Erasmus echoes his own retranslation of *evangelizare* in 4:18; see n50. 'Meek' and 'poor in spirit' (*mites*; *pauperos spiritu*) echo Matthew's version of the Beatitudes, 5:3 and 5. The interlinear *Gloss* (on 4:18) points out the connection between 'the poor' in 4:18 and 'the poor in spirit' in Matt 5:3. Hugh of St Cher (on 4:18) 155r says that 'another text' (meaning Isa 61:1) reads 'He sent me to announce to the meek,' and that these two qualities were especially emphasized in Christ's teaching.

55 Erasmus had included in his quotation of 4:18 'to heal the brokenhearted,' a clause no longer read in this verse though it has precedent in Isa 61:1 and Ps 147:3; cf n50. Hence his paraphrase here. For 'heal' in the latter part of the sentence he uses the verb *medere*, which is also the verb in Isa 61:1 Vulg and in Bede's paraphrase on 4:18, *In Lucam expos* PL 92 374A.

devil or are in bondage to the superstition of the Law and unable to aspire to freedom of spirit.[56] By faith he will open the eyes of people blind in heart and wandering in the deepest gloom of error, so they may see the light of eternal truth, according to the prophecy this same prophet declared in another place: "A people who sat in darkness has seen a great light" [Isa 9:2].[57] He will restore to their original freedom those who seem shattered and downtrodden at Satan's hands by every kind of evil.[58] He will preach that the true jubilee of the Lord is near, as desirable to all as it will be acceptable to every burning heart.[59]

'Moses established a sabbath of days when he ordered a respite from common labours every seventh day; he established a sabbath of years when he commanded a rest from the cultivation of the soil every seventh year and that nothing be taken from the earth except what it produced on its own. He also established a year of restoration of former liberty, to which was given the name "jubilee" among the Hebrews, from the act.[60] That came as the fiftieth year after seven sets of seven years. This was desirable to all Israelites who

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56 The view that the promised freedom applies equally to Jews and gentiles is also found in Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 537D, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 4:18 twice), and Hugh of St Cher (on 4:18–19) 155r (with much attention to the universality of the offered salvation). Origen *Hom in Lucam* 32 PL 26 313B specifically focuses on the gentiles; Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 374A interprets 'the broken' as meaning the Jews, broken under the weight of the Law.

57 A passage already alluded to in the paraphrase on 4:14, 138, with n41.

58 Though Satan is not mentioned in 4:18–19, he is brought into the exegesis of the passage by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 32 PL 26 313B, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 4:18), Hugh of St Cher (on 4:18) 155r, and a passage attributed to Basil, along with another attributed to Cyril, in the *Catena aurea* (on 4:18).

59 'Desirable' and 'acceptable' (*exoptabilem* and *acceptabilem*). Erasmus had given *acceptum et optabilem* in the quotation of 4:19; cf n52. The text of Erasmus' NT of 4:19 has only δεκτόν (*acceptum*); in Isa 61:2 the word is δεκτόν (LXX) *placabilem* (Vulg) 'pleasing, acceptable,' or in Jerome's text of 61:2 quoted in *Commentarii in Isaiam* PL 24 598C *acceptabilem*. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 749D said on 4:19, 'What is the acceptable [δεκτόν] year? Desirable [ἐπιθυμητός] and lovable [ἐπέραστος] to the righteous.' Erasmus' *acceptabilem* is perhaps drawn from 2 Cor 6:2 'Now is the acceptable [*acceptabile*] time,' a passage quoted in the context of 4:19 by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 536D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 374B, the *Gloss* (on 4:19), and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 752A. Hugh of St Cher (on 4:19) 155r comments on the *placabilem* of Isa 61:2 that God is made 'pleasing' to penitent mortals.

60 Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 67 gives *dimittens* 'releasing, letting go' as a meaning of 'Iobel' and 'Iubal' (RSV Jabal and Jubal) in his list for Genesis; there is no list for Leviticus. Hugh of St Cher (on 4:19) 155r says that 'Iubel' means 'remission.' The spelling 'Iubel' does not appear in CCL 72, but it seems

were burdened by slavery or debt. But as the sabbath of Moses refreshed only bodies by rest, so the seventh year looked to the refreshment of the soil.[61] Now an everlasting sabbath is proclaimed, in which the heart free and clear of all tumult of evil desires ought to be at rest for quiet study of heavenly things and not be concerned in anxious worry about earthly things, since those who love God lack nothing.[62] Why, even Moses' sabbath helped no one but the Israelites, and it did not grant liberty either without a price or without exception; and what it did grant was physical and temporary. But to all who by their sins are in debt to the devil, who serve the demons as slaves, who in ignorance of the truth are blind, who are lost in every kind of evil and unfit for every good work, this year of the Lord brings complete and freely given forgiveness, freedom, sight, health, and wholeness. All the more should every one of you embrace what is being offered. For what you have heard promised by prophecy can be experienced in actuality. You have heard with your ears, but to be capable of so much bliss you must have hearts that are ready and eager. What is being freely offered is the best thing possible.[63]

'But woe to those who spurn God's kindness when it is so readily obtainable. This is the jubilee year, freely offering liberty and salvation to those who, by their mildness and willingness to believe, show themselves capable

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likely that in Hugh's day spelling conventions for transliterated Hebrew words were not rigidly fixed.

61 For the weekly sabbath, see eg Exod 20:8–10, 23:12–13, Lev 23:3, Deut 5:12–15; for the sabbath of years, Exod 23:10–11, Lev 25:1–7; for the year of jubilee, Lev 25:8–55.

62 That the, or at any rate a, meaning of the jubilee or 'acceptable year' is the everlasting time of bliss after all sins and failures of this world have passed away is proposed by Origen *Hom in Lucam* 32 PL 26 313C and Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1701A. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 374A–B suggests that the 'year' is the time of the church, the 'now' of 2 Cor 6:2; Hugh of St Cher (on 4:19) 155r says it is the time of grace, before which all mortals went to the underworld. Origen, Ambrose, and Bede are cited by the *Catena aurea* (on 4:18–19).
In Erasmus' remarks about not being anxious there may be an allusion to Jesus' words at 12:22–31 and its parallel at Matt 6:25–34; the comment that the lovers of God *diligentibus Deum* 'lack nothing' *nihil desit* may echo the opening verse of Psalm 23 (Vulg 22) *mihi nihil deerit* 'I shall lack nothing.'

63 These last several sentences echo many passages of Scripture, OT and NT, as well as 4:18–19 itself. One obvious example is 'every good work,' which appears in 2 Cor 9:8 and five or six other places in the Epistles. Another is the comparison between hearing with the ears and understanding with the heart, Isa 6:9–10 and its many restatements and derivatives, eg 8:10 (see its paraphrase in chapter 8 235) and Rom 11:8–10.

of being taught and healed. But a year of retribution[64] and vengeance follows this one; it will exact eternal punishment from those who have rejected God's goodness.'

In these words Jesus modestly indicated that he was the one about whom the prophecy of Isaiah spoke, though many believed that the passage referred not to the Messiah but to Isaiah himself.[65] In fact, when Jesus was being baptized, the Holy Spirit coming down from heaven in visible form and sitting on his head alerted the people that this was the one the prophecy had meant. 'Anointing' suggests something gentle and calm. For nothing is calmer than oil, and hence the name given to the Messiah, which is *christon*[66] in Greek and 'anointed' in Latin. Now John's preaching was stern and threatening; Christ lured everyone to salvation by gentleness, friendliness, and kind deeds.

Most of the people looked at Jesus admiringly as he said these things with complete authority yet with equal gentleness, and they were amazed at the speech, far different from that of the Pharisees: calm, gentle, amicable, seasoned with much charm, without any arrogance, savagery, or insolence; and still a speech that had its own kind of authority.[67] The words of the Pharisees, indeed, since they came from a heart corrupted by self-seeking, ambition, greed, envy, and the other evil desires, generally had the flavour of their source. But the speech that proceeded from Jesus' mouth, since it came from a breast full of a heavenly spirit, was both appealing to all good folk and effective for salvation. Yet there were those among them for whom the humbleness of his clan and family somewhat lessened the authority of his heavenly teaching. For everyone still thought he was the son of Joseph

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64 *retributionis* 'retribution' in the lifetime editions but *tribulationis* 'tribulation' in LB VII 326D, with a note that 'another edition' has *retributionis*

65 Thomas Aquinas *Expos in Isaiam* (on 61:1), in his *divisio* of the first section of Isaiah 61, indicates that 'me' in verse 1 could be either Isaiah or Christ. Nicholas of Lyra (on Isa 61:1 *divisio*) says that some Catholic exegetes understand Isaiah to mean that he, Isaiah, was the person anointed to declare good news, which was news of the coming liberation of the Jews from their Babylonian captivity. Nicholas himself, like Erasmus here, rejects the historical intepretation; Jerome *Commentarii in Isaiam* 61 PL 24 598C does not mention it.

66 *christon* is χριστόν in the lifetime editions and LB (neuter gender so as to agree with the gender of *nomen* 'name'); 'anointed' is *unctum*.

67 Like Hugh of St Cher (on 4:22) 155v Erasmus takes Luke's 'everyone' as 'most of the people,' on the grounds that some people must have had the sceptical opinions expressed in the following verses. Cf Erasmus' comments on the boy Jesus' manner of speech and general deportment in the paraphrases on 2:40, 90–1 and 2:47, 94 above.

and Mary, and the low standing of both parents' kin by blood and marriage was well known; and they saw that in the many years since his boyhood he had been taught nothing but his father's trade and had never attended the schools of Pharisees and legal scholars, who with great haughtiness taught the mysteries of Sacred Scripture. So they wondered whence so much power had suddenly come upon him, power that he had already displayed in other cities by a variety of miracles, and such an amazing knowledge of Scripture, and so much eloquence together with authority. For they did not yet understand how much more powerful anointing by the Spirit is than the teaching of the Pharisees. Thus, forming their judgments about him on the basis of what they knew of him according to the flesh, they said, 'Isn't this man the son of Joseph the carpenter?'[68] For they had not learned that there was a heavenly Father who was working through his Son.

But because Jesus did far fewer miracles in Nazareth than he had done in other cities (and for that reason some of his relatives were rather irked at him[69]) they taunted him on grounds of not possessing power in all circumstances or of being prejudiced against his own people. In so doing they were hunting for some human self-glorification in a matter whose glory was entirely owed to God. Jesus put a stop to their godless grumbling in words of this kind: 'Because you have heard that I have healed all kinds of diseases among other people, you are naturally going to repeat to me that common expression "'Physician, heal yourself'; we have heard that you did wonders in Capernaum,[70] where you were a visitor and you have no one related to you by blood. But you ought to be particularly considerate of the needs of

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68 Having just mentioned both Jesus' parents by name, Erasmus here adds to Luke's text the identification of Joseph as a *faber* 'carpenter' or 'builder, workman' found in Matt 13:55 and Mark 6:3. The question about Jesus' lack of schooling appears in John 7:15 and is brought into discussion here by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 541D.

69 The attitude of Jesus' kin is not recorded here in Luke but Erasmus may be alluding to John 7:3; see the paraphrase on that verse in CWE 46 91.

70 The spelling 'Capernaum' instead of 'Caphernaum' in this sentence was an object of Béda's disapproval. Erasmus replied in the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 492D that 'the Greeks consistently write "Capernaum," and I do not think it foolish if I report it as Luke wrote it.' LB prints 'Capernaum' in the *Paraphrases* and 'Caphernaum' in the *Divinationes*; perhaps 'Capharnaum' was in the texts Erasmus used, as in Jerome *De nominibus Hebraeis* PL 23 843, though the listing in CCL 72 139 spells 'Cafarnaum.' Nestle-Aland (on 4:31) lists several manuscript traditions that read as Erasmus says but in the text prints a Greek version that transliterated into Latin is 'Capharnaum.'

your own people. Do for yourself the same thing you are doing for your kinsmen and fellow citizens. Then if that power of yours is unique to you and permanent, whatever you've done among the citizens of Capernaum and among strangers do here too, among your own people, the ones with the closest ties to you, and in your father's city."'[71]

Their godless grumbling thus exposed, Jesus gave them an answer: 'I am indeed the physician ready to heal all the diseases of anyone, if only he presents himself ready to be healed. For no physician however learned and kind can heal the sick if they refuse the medicine offered them and distrust their trustworthy physician. Yet the tendency of ordinary people is to put a higher value on an unknown physician who comes from a distant region; and he finds more confidence placed in him where he is valued on no other grounds than his skill. Even in his skill, which he takes with him everywhere, he is always the same, no matter where he is. But where he finds people distrustful and disdainful, then for all his skill he cannot help many – not because he for his part wants, or is able, to do less there, but because the very people he wished to help deny themselves the benefit of healing.[72]

'What happens to doctors happens even more to prophets. For the doctors' skill sometimes benefits the unwilling too; but since a prophet particularly heals souls, he is not even able to bring relief to those who reject the offered healing. And one who does not trust the offer in fact rejects it. Many distrust prophets because they rate them not by the power of God working in them but by the bodily weakness they see in them as in other mortals. Reread the accounts of the ancient prophets, and you will find that what I am telling you is very clear: no prophet was ever considered valuable in the land of his birth and among his own kin, not because they were either less able or less willing to benefit their own than they were strangers, but because the unbelief of their kinfok made those kin unworthy of God's benefits. For the gifts

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71 Cf the point of view that Erasmus has Luke put in the mouths of the Nazarenes opposing Jesus here with the explanation of Cyril and Theophylact, reported in n47, that Jesus' mere arrival in Nazareth is a gift to them.

72 Erasmus develops the need for a patient's cooperation and the preference of patients for a doctor from far away in order to connect the two proverbs in Jesus' words in verses 23 and 24, perhaps influenced by Hugh of St Cher's long digression on Jesus the physician of souls (on 4:23) 155v and his own interest in presenting the evangelist Luke as a physician. See Jane E. Phillips '*Sub evangelistae persona*' in *Holy Scripture Speaks: The Production and Reception of Erasmus' Paraphrases on the New Testament* ed Hilmar Pabel and Mark Vessey (Toronto 2002) 137–8 and the parallel paraphrase on Matt 13:58 CWE 45 220.

of God are not given to kinship but to inclination of mind; not to relationship in the flesh but to readiness of spirit, not to family but to faith.

'Indeed, I assure you most definitely that in the era of the prophet Elijah, when no rain fell for three whole years and six months and therefore the barrenness of the soil had oppressed all those regions with a great famine, there were many widows among the Israelite people; and yet the prophet, risking death from hunger, was sent to be fed by none of these but to a widow of Zarephath in the territory of the Sidonians. Why was he not rather sent to the widows of Jerusalem, to increase there a jar of meal and a cruet of oil, to do a notable wonder in the house of one of them by recalling a child to life? Of course the reason is that among the Israelites there was no woman who equalled the pure faith of this foreign gentile. When asked she readily gave him water; when he promised that the jar and the cruet would not run out, she trusted him and prepared a mealcake, as she was bidden. This was surely an Israelite's heart in a woman not an Israelite.[73] So much more weight does spirit carry with God than race.

'Did not something similar happen in the days of Elisha the prophet, who succeeded Elijah? For surely there were many lepers among the Israelites who longed for healing. So why was none of them cleansed by Elisha, but only Naaman the Syrian, a worshipper of idols and a stranger to the people of Israel? Could the prophet not do among his own people what he did for a foreigner and gentile? Was he readier to deserve well of godless strangers than of his own fellow citizens? Not at all; but the man's faith earned God's kindness. For he believed that God could provide this thing through his worshippers, and when he was bidden to submerge himself in the Jordan three times,[74] he obeyed. If there had been the same faith among the Israelite lepers, they would have known God's goodness too.'

In these words the Lord Jesus had reproved the unbelief of his townsmen, by which they had made themselves unworthy of God's kindnesses, and at the same time he implied that the gift of gospel power was moving not just from his own unbelieving townsmen but also from the Jews generally to the widow of Sidon, that is, to the church of the gentiles, and to Naaman

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73 According to Jerome's definition in *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 75 and 154, an Israelite is a person who sees God; compare John 1:47.

74 In the lifetime editions consulted 'three times' appears uncorrected. In the *Supputatio* of 1527, LB IX 610A, Erasmus thanks Béda for pointing out the inadvertent mistake in this passage and says it has been corrected. The passage is cited again in *Declarationes* CWE 82 159–60. The LB text of the paraphrase has the correct number 'seven times' with no reference to 'another edition'; see 2 Kings 5:10 and 14.

the Syrian, that is, to people formerly idol worshippers.[75] Then the malicious grumbling turned into manifest indignation.

For everyone's spirits were so stirred up because he dared to say this in the public synagogue, preferring Sidonians and Syrians, accursed persons among the Jews, to the people of Israel, that an uproar ensued and they drove Jesus out of the city of Nazareth. Not content with that, they led him to the brow of the hill on which the city was built, to throw him from it headfirst. O godless citizens! O the approbation of a fickle folk, suddenly reversed into so much fury! And later they are surprised that salvation does not come to them, when they drive the author of salvation into exile! They are indignant that the devout belief of gentiles is praised, but they do not correct their own godless unbelief correspondingly. They demanded a physician and cannot endure to swallow the health-giving dose of bitter truth; they want their bodies healed and disregard the diseases of their spirits. Yet the medicine for a sick spirit is true – and therefore mordant – speech. They would rather have a mild but deadly poison than a bitter but salutary drug. They require wonders performed for human glory, which Christ never did except for the salvation of humankind and the glory of God. And he had not come to heal bodies that would soon die in any case but to heal spirits that would live forever.

Just consider with me the topsy-turvy religion of the people of Nazareth: it was the sabbath, and they held it wrong to mend a shoe on that day;[76] yet they do not hold it wrong to push a fellow citizen who is inviting them to salvation over a precipice. Of course through these people Satan was trying to accomplish what he had urged on his own, and he found accomplices worse

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75 Origen *Hom in Lucam* 32 PL 26 314B–315C notes that the widow and Naaman are types of the gentiles to whom Jesus will preach. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1711B calls the widow a model of the church and Naaman a figure of the foreign-born strangers who will make up that church; Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 376C–377D calls the widow a type of the church of gentiles and Naaman a type of the gentiles who promise to give up idol worship as he did (2 Kings 5:15 and 17). The *Gloss* (on 4:27) cites Bede but omits reference to foreswearing idol worship; the *Catena aurea* (on 4:29) cites Ambrose.

76 Whatever might have been Erasmus' inducement to use this particular example of sabbath strictness, the ultimate source is the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 73A and following, as is the list below at the end of the paraphrase on verse 32. He certainly knew enough about the content of Talmudic literature to be dismissive of its complexity (Ep 798:21–5); he could at least have come across some of it, or teachers of it, during his time in Italy, for he says in the same place and equally dismissively, 'Italy is full of Jews.' He was not himself successful in his study of Hebrew; cf Ep 181:41–5 (1504).

than himself. He himself, indeed, dared nothing more than to urge jumping headfirst. These accomplices gather together and drag their well-known and well-deserving fellow citizen to the precipice and so far as they were able, would have thrown him over headfirst. Their godless will carried out whatever it could, but accomplishment was not granted to that depraved will. For the time had not yet come when it was best for us that Jesus should die, though he had come to die on our behalf, but in his own good time, which the Father had determined for him, and by the kind of death that the Father had chosen. Not just any sabbath suited him but the sabbath of the Passover, when it was proper for the Lamb that would be the liberator of the world to be sacrificed; a precipice did not suit him but elevation on the cross. Lucifer was hurled down from a precipice because of his pride, and for that reason he entices others to a fall.[77] The Son of God had lowered himself to the earth of his own free will so that once raised onto the cross, he might draw all things to himself and according to his own example in humility carry up into heaven those whom the prince of pride was trying to cast down into hell by arrogance and unbelief.[78] Nor was Nazareth the right place to perform that sacrifice, but Jerusalem.

So Jesus allowed himself to be driven out, so as not to preach to the unworthy (and he taught his apostles to do the same); he did not allow himself to be thrown headlong, though he was willing to die of his own free will. What then? He did not turn himself into a bird or a serpent, or [do] some other kind of trick in order to escape thus; he passed without harm through the midst of those who had dragged him off to throw him down.[79] Here he showed plainly that the wickedness of mortals could do nothing against him unless he offered himself of his own free will to capture and execution. And with this justification our most merciful Lord Jesus was content to have left behind those whom he found incurable. Otherwise, with a nod

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77 See 10:18 and its paraphrase, 269, and Isa 14:12.

78 For 'draw all things to himself,' see John 12:32. Erasmus' word translated 'hell' is the Greek and Latin *Tartara*, a variant of *Tartarus* often used by Roman poets for the underworld.

79 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1713C, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 378B, suggests that Jesus passed through the mob untouched because their minds had suddenly been changed or struck senseless; both go on to say that the attempt to kill him failed so that the mob might have time to repent and be saved. The *Gloss* (on 4:30) recapitulates Ambrose and Bede but adds the theory that Jesus hid under a rock that melted like wax at the touch of his garment and made a hollow for him to hide in, and says the lines and wrinkles of the cloth can still be seen there. Hugh of St Cher (on 4:28) 156r quotes Bede's version; Nicholas of Lyra (on 4:30) attributes to Bede the story of the melting rock.

he could have driven over the precipice those who had dragged him to the fatal leap. But rather than killing them as criminals, he preferred that they survive so that after time had passed they might look back and turn from criminals into innocents. For sometimes the removal of access to a benefit calls forth a longing for the one who was prepared to make the benefit available. Certainly they could be summoned either to glimpsing the might of one against whose power the combined efforts of a maddened crowd could do nothing, or to loving the goodness of one who preferred to preserve for repentance people[80] trying every wickedness possible rather than destroy them for punishment.

So, leaving Nazareth the proud, a rebel against the gospel word,[81] Jesus went down and set out for Capernaum, a city of Galilee, rich and thus lost in luxury, pleasures, self-seeking, pride, and the other vices that typically accompany wealth. But here the personal familiarity that usually breeds contempt was absent.[82] So then, as was his custom, here he went to the gathering on the sabbath and taught them.[83] For the murderous godlessness of the people of Nazareth could not affect him so much that, offended at their shocking deed, he would leave the region of the Jews and transfer the gift of the gospel to the gentiles immediately. But he showed by his action what he later taught his disciples: that is, that when they were driven out of one city they should flee to another, thinking not about vengeance but about spreading the gospel, so that even the wickedness of those who expelled them would be profitable for hastening the proclamation of gospel preaching.[84]

Furthermore, though people in Capernaum were absorbed in worldly affairs and not much different from gentiles in their habits because of the mingling in the markets, he found them more sincere than his own Nazarenes, to whom he ought to have been dearer because of the observed

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80 'People trying every wickedness possible' is *extrema molitos* in the lifetime editions consulted. LB VII 329C prints *extrema molitus*, with no note of alternate readings; the clause would then have no expressed object and run 'one who, trying every goodness possible, preferred to preserve for repentance rather than to destroy for punishment.'

81 'Word' is *sermo*; see n14.

82 'Familiarity . . . breeds contempt' is the moral of Aesop's fable of the Fox and the Lion; see the paraphrase on John 4:44 CWE 46 42 with n67.

83 Erasmus uses *congregatio* 'gathering,' a precise Latin synonym for the Latinized Greek word *synagoga* 'synagogue.'

84 The instruction that on their mission trips Jesus' disciples should leave a city that rejects them for another city where they might be better received is in Matt 10:23; see the paraphrase on that verse CWE 45 173.

and well-known uninterrupted uprightness of his life.[85] Indeed the people of Capernaum were greatly amazed at Jesus' teaching because it was not watered down and falsely coloured, as the Pharisees' teaching was, all about ritual bathing, titheing mint and rue, putting offerings in the corban, and similar things that made up superstition more truly than godliness and that were imposed on the simple for the glory or profit of the Pharisees, while the Pharisees themselves, who taught such things, did not observe even the main points in the commandments of the Law. But Jesus' teaching was solid stuff, packed full of authority. For first of all, what he taught was completely true and in accordance with natural sense. Then it made for true godliness and eternal salvation. Besides, his unparalleled uprightness of life recommended his teaching. Added to all this was the unusual power of his miracles, which made it clear that what he taught came from God, not from a human spirit.[86]

For our Lord Jesus did not perform miracles for profit or for idle showing off. In his miracles he first relieved the hardships of suffering human beings to win good will by his good deed; then they were displayed to bodily eyes for a time so that through the miracles humans might learn to believe things that, though they could not see them, were still more desirable. Finally, his miracles contained a figure and representation of what was being carried out in human hearts. It was the sabbath, and the people were very conscientiously resting from tasks that were forbidden though not evil in themselves, such as making a journey or lighting a fire or grinding grain or pressing wine or mending a tunic that had come apart.[87] So outwardly it was the sabbath, but inwardly there were great tumults in their hearts, which the spirit of Satan had roused up there, whipping their minds with all kinds of impulses: greed, pride, anger, vengeance, envy. For the true sabbath is precisely where the spirit of the Lord calms the heart from all its vicious passions.

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85 'Uprightness . . . life' is *integritas vitae*, also repeated just below. Cf n45.

86 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 379A comments that Jesus' effectiveness was ensured by the absence of any inconsistency between his teaching and his own way of life; his remark is echoed by the *Gloss* (on 4:32) and Nicholas of Lyra (on 4:32). Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 753C–D notes that Jesus' miracles were his most effective tool, used in this episode in Capernaum without any preliminary teaching.

87 For the list of sabbath restrictions, see n76. Some suggestion of these restrictions is found in Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 379A, who mentions the sabbath prohibition on lighting a fire or moving hand or foot; that much could be no more than a restatement of Exod 20:9–10, 23:12, 31:12–17, 34:21, 35:2–3, and Deut 5:12–15.

Indeed, a figure of this fact was present, a man in the synagogue whose body was in bondage to an unclean demon, a silent reminder of how much more unhappy are those whose hearts are in bondage to even fouler evils. For what demon is more unclean, more harmful, than lust, anger, self-seeking, desire for money, jealousy, hypocrisy? The Jews who were frequently present in the synagogue were in very large part bound to demons of this kind, for the synagogue had not yet received the spirit of Christ but was driven by as many demons as the vices to which it was a slave. And they could not be capable of receiving the gospel spirit, gentle without compare, unless the Lord Jesus had first driven the evil and vindictive spirit of Satan out of them.

So the demon-possessed man, not enduring Jesus' strange power, which presented itself wordlessly, began to make a racket with loud shouting: 'Hah![88] What business do you have with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to ruin us before the set time?[89] We know what punishment is waiting for us on the last day. But right now your presence is twisting and tormenting us ahead of time. We aren't asking for salvation, or begging off punishment, but we do demand postponement. We never felt anything like this from the presence of other prophets. Besides, it's no secret to us who you are. For you are the Holy One of God who will defeat all ungodliness and drive off all uncleanness. The Law has its own righteousness, its own purity, but you are the one and only whom God has made holy with heavenly righteousness.'

The Lord Jesus did not put up with being proclaimed by an ungodly spirit because he wanted all this glory to be credited to his Father alone, and he was well aware that the demon's declaration came not from true faith but from wicked wilfulness. For it was making the declaration in order to elicit

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88 'Hah!' is *eia*, a Latin particle 'of impatient exhortation,' as L&S say, like some uses of the colloquial 'hey!' in English. Following his own annotation *sine* (on 4:34) Erasmus replaces the Vulgate *sine*, an imperative verb meaning 'Let [us] be!' that translates the imperative verb ἔα, the first word in the Greek text of verse 34. Erasmus, however, thought that the Greek word could as well be what he calls an *adverbium*, ie a particle, that is spelled in the same way, 'an exclamation of surprise or displeasure' according to LSJ (chapter 3 n3 above), which interprets it so in this passage; the Neo-Vulgata of 4:34 in Nestle-Aland continues to read *sine*. Fitzmyer AB Luke 541 and 545 takes it as the particle, not the verb. The rephrasing of the remark by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 548D shows that Cyril understood ἔα as the imperative verb.

89 'Before the set time' (*ante tempus*) comes from Matthew's version of the expulsion of demons into the Gerasene swine, Matt 8:29; see the paraphrase on Luke 8:29, 239. Erasmus varies the phrase just below, 'ahead of time' *ante diem*.

a confession, doing through the mouth of the man exactly what the tempter Satan had earlier done himself directly. It made its declaration deceitfully, not to achieve salvation itself but to block the salvation of others. Nor did love produce these words, but fear of punishment. And therefore it deserves to be spoken to like an evil and evil-minded slave:[90] 'Be silent, unclean spirit, and come out of the man you are possessing like a tyrant. I have come to save humankind.' At this omnipotent and mighty command from Jesus, the godless spirit, after throwing the man to the ground and shaking him hard, went out of him so that no damage remained in the man once he had been set free. The fact that the spirit threw him down was proof of its perverse wilfulness, a sign that it was abandoning its possession quite unwillingly. The fact that it left the man undamaged proves that godless spirits can hurt none who have surrendered themselves completely to the Saviour. For the goodness of Jesus on his own can do more to save than the wickedness of countless demons can do to destroy. What is more, there are those who try to free human bodies from harmful spirits, applying every remedy to drive out the evil: prayers in set forms of words, fumigations, sprinklings, powerful herbs, and other ceremonies not unlike magic rituals; and yet with all these we rarely see a spirit driven out. But whenever it does leave, it leaves traces of its wickedness, a limb cut off or an untreatable disease remaining.[91]

When the people saw that at Jesus' simple and stern bidding the spirit had suddenly left the man in such a state that his complete health had no trace of his former illness, a stunned amazement seized everyone who had seen the deed, and they talked with each other about Jesus like this: 'What is this strange business that we see, neither heard of nor read of before? He commands unclean spirits with just a word, and there is so much force and

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90 Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 55C, on Matt 8:29–31a, says that the demon's declaration 'I know that you are the Holy One of God' is 'not the declaration of the will that is followed by a reward for the declarer but the extortion of necessity that forces the unwilling' and then compares the declaration to the words of fugitive slaves freshly returned to their owner and daring to ask nothing more than a reduction in the amount of whipping they expect. Jerome's comment is taken over in the present context by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 379C and repeated by the *Gloss* (on 4:34).

91 Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* 3.3 CSEL 43 395 says that demons usually leave their victims with some damage or loss of limbs when they are expelled. Hugh of St Cher (on 4:35) 157r repeats the observation and remarks, citing Chrysostom, that Jesus, being God, simply commands the demon to depart and does not ask or invite or exorcise. Hugh may be referring to Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 28 (on Matt 8:25–9) PG 57 352, but 'exorcise' is Hugh's word, not Chrysostom's.

authority in his orders that, as if recognizing one more powerful than themselves, they hastily leave a man in such a state that after their departure his full health returns.'

The spectacle of such a stunning miracle caused Jesus' fame to circulate the news, not only in the city of Capernaum but throughout the whole region, that this had taken place in the synagogue of the Jews. Meanwhile the synagogue, lacking the spirit of Christ, was in an uproar against gospel truth because of the spirit of Satan, at whose urging the Nazarenes schemed destruction for the Saviour.

So he left the synagogue and went to the house of Simon (who had been given the surname Peter), whose mother-in-law was in the grip of a high fever. Her relatives by blood and marriage asked Jesus, who had expelled a demon from a man without being asked, to grant to the prayers of her friends relief from a fever for a woman related by marriage to the disciple he considered one of his best.

Then in order to show that he was a doer of good deeds both privately and publicly, towards acquaintances and strangers, towards every age, sex, and station in life, Jesus stood near the woman and leaning over her told the fever to leave.[92] And as soon as the disease fled at the Lord's bidding, there was no gradual return of bodily strength, as usually happens with those who find relief with medical assistance; but all her strength and quickness

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92 'Stood near' and 'leaning over' are *adstans* and *imminens*. In the annotation *et stans super illam* (on 4:39) Erasmus had noted that the Latin translator's version of ἐπιστὰς ἐπάνω αὐτῆς 'standing over [or 'on top of'] her' sounded as if Jesus had the woman under his foot; he thinks it more likely that Jesus stood near (*adstare*) and bent over (*incumbere*) her as one does when waking a sleeper. Since one meaning of *incumbere* is 'lie upon,' Edward Lee was offended by the obscene sense that could be attributed to Jesus' action, especially since the next sentence in the Latin Gospel text is *et dimisit illam* 'and he [or 'it'] let her [or 'it,' the fever] go.' See *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* Note 46 CWE 72 154–6. Consequently Erasmus had added *ea* 'it,' ie 'the fever,' in his NT text as the subject of 'let go.' In the paraphrase here he changes the 'obscene' verb *incumbere* to *imminere* 'lean over,' connoting a degree of menace, and instead of using just a pronoun he clarifies both Jesus' address to the fever and the statement of its departure (at the beginning of the next sentence).

Like Erasmus here but in less detailed terms, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1714A describes the move in Luke's narrative from the afflicted man to the fevered woman as illustrating Jesus' concern for the salvation of both halves, the male and the female, of humankind. Ambrose is cited by the *Catena aurea* (on 4:38).

followed instantly, so that rising from her bed, she prepared a meal for Jesus and his disciples, and served them at table.[93]

What is more, so great was the Lord's readiness to do good to everyone that he did not even use an inconvenient time as an excuse to those who in wholehearted faith demanded his help. For as the matter spread throughout the whole city, all those who had sick people at home suffering from various diseases brought them to the doors of the house where Jesus was staying. Yet he most mercifully made no excuse, either that he was a private individual and was owed some rest or that night-time was not convenient for doing such healing, but laid his health-bringing hands on everyone presented to him, and with no trouble and no fee drove off every kind of sickness from them all. In this figure of reality he taught everyone who wished to be free of diseases of the soul that they need flee nowhere but to Jesus himself, for he was ready to pardon freely whatever anyone had done if they turned in honest faith to him, the one author of true salvation. For there is no kind of disease so incurable, so stubborn, so deadly, that it will not take flight at his touch and bidding. And here, ready for bishops and pastors, who are Christ's successors, there is a model of how much mercy they ought to use in welcoming sinners who desire to repent of their sins. For if our Lord Jesus, in whom there was not even a trace of disease or vice, was not put off by any foulness of disease from welcoming, touching, and healing, how much more is it fitting for the same to be done by those whom Jesus' kindness has earlier cleansed of diseases of soul, and who even now are not free from all guilt – especially since they themselves do not take away disease but are only ministers of a gift from heaven, urging the sick to pray for healing and leading them to the mighty physician and rousing his mercy with their prayers, that he may deign to touch the hearts of the sick with his own hands.

Not only did diseases flee at the bidding of his voice and the touch of his hands, but demons too, not enduring the divine power of Jesus, voluntarily took flight from the bodies of the wretched whom they had long possessed. So great a part of bliss it is to draw near to Christ! And the one who draws near is any person who is dissatisfied with himself and longs to become better, and who has formed a sure faith that through Jesus' indescribable mercy all sins, no matter how heinous, are forgiven. There are varieties of types of diseases in the body, yet also no fewer, and even more damaging,

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93 Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 27 PG 58 344–5 and Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 380C both remark on the complete recovery, without a period of regaining strength and vigour, that results from Jesus' healing in this episode.

types of spirits – unless perhaps there are fewer kinds of intemperance than of fevers, or unless it is more dangerous for a body to burn with fever than for a mind to go mad with lust. Among the diseases of the body there are also some so disgusting that not even one's closest friends can be near the patient, such as phthiriasis;[94] some diseases are so contagious that it is not safe to be near them, chiefly such as leprosy and what they call pestilence; yet there is scarcely any illness that is not harmful to some degree by close contact. Then again there are some illnesses so violent or of such long standing that they defeat the aid and skill of physicians. But the power of our physician is too great to be inferior to the magnitude of any illness; his purity is too great to be stained by any human evils; his mercy is too great to be turned away by any foulness. Our good physician welcomes all; he, being himself completely pure, touches all; being completely powerful, he heals all. Yet over no physical ills do doctors have less authority than ones that afflict the dwelling of the mind, such as frenzy and depression. Persons possessed by demons are even harder to heal than these, for godless spirits, more powerful than human nature, drive both their minds and their bodies as they please. And the usual practice is not to take these persons to doctors but to leave them to the help of heaven. For the force of this evil is so great that it is pitiable even to observe the sufferers.

Now perhaps those who in the lust for power are drawn to poisonings, parricides, sacrilege, and worse crimes than these do not appear equally pitiable – but they are far and away more wretched. Rage forces them to depredation of the innocent, to slaughter of the undeserving, to wars, fires, worldwide public uproar. How small an evil it is that someone physically possessed of a demon either does or endures if you compare it to the vast storms by which any prince maddened by a spirit of tyranny is harassed, or to the great destruction that he brings upon human affairs! The force of this evil surpasses human strength, but the Spirit of Christ is stronger. Once the mind of a human being grasps that Spirit, anything that is part of unclean spirits must flee. When that happens, in a flash the tyrant becomes a father; the cruel ruler becomes most merciful; the pillager of his people becomes an uplifter of the oppressed; the raging warrior becomes an advocate of peace; the robber becomes a gift giver; the braggart Thraso becomes a

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94 Phthiriasis, the dictionary definition of Erasmus' *morbus pedicularis*, is a morbid infestation of lice, for which Pliny *Naturalis historia* 23.94, 24.18 and 73, 25.61 describes several treatments.

sober-minded and judicious prince.[95] Only let him be led to Jesus and away from the world.[96]

So indeed at that time not a few had come at sunset to the house of Simon, that is, to the gospel church, and by the power of the Spirit of Christ godless spirits were departing, proclaiming that he whose goodness was mightier than their evil was present. For as they left they called out, 'You are the Son of God.' But the time had not yet come when the Lord wanted it to be known to all that he was the Messiah, the Son of God; and if he had wanted that, he did not want unclean spirits as heralds of his glory, either because their proclamation was not honest but deceptive, or because there was a risk that if their witness started to carry weight in so great a business, they would earn credibility in other matters in which they delighted to deceive by lying. For since Satan is by nature a liar, even when he tells the truth he does so to no other end than to deceive.[97] And of course some who mix godly with godless things and truth with falsehood, as if adding lethal poison to health-giving food, have learned this trick from him so as to entice more people

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95 Thraso is a soldier characterized by braggadocio and lust in the comedy *Eunuchus* by the Roman playwright Terence, one of Erasmus' favourite authors among the Latin classics. See also the paraphrases on 3:14 and 19, 110 and 114, with the associated notes.

96 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1714A–1717A has a substantial discussion of Jesus' healing miracles at the end of Luke 4, in which he sees the physical illnesses and disabilities as metaphors for the diseases of the soul for which Jesus offers salvation. But there is little comparable to Erasmus' amplifications about the role of bishops and priests, the specific features of diseases and mental conditions, and the moral flaws of persons in power and the resulting social ills. This latter point occurs often in Erasmus; see eg the paraphrase on 3:19, 114–15 with n45 and the picture drawn in his 1503 *Panegyricus* CWE 27 53–5, addressed to Philip of Austria, of the miserable situation of a state under a warlike ruler, whose opposite Philip is proclaimed to be.

97 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 381B, followed by the *Gloss* (on 4:41), here quotes a passage of Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1782D (who in fact is commenting on 9:22) to the effect that one who hears a preacher should not follow the preacher if he goes wrong, for the devil is a wicked teacher who loves to cover his deceitfulness with the appearance of truth.
This sentence was regarded by Béda as objectionable; according to Erasmus' defence in *Supputatio* prop 61 LB IX 610B–D Béda's reason was that *natura* is never used to mean *natura corrupta* 'corrupt nature.' But this is false, Erasmus says, citing Aristotle, Terence, John 8:44, and Paul in Eph 2:31, with Jerome's remark on that passage that *natura* 'by nature' can mean both 'by one's condition' and 'of course, naturally.'

into destruction. So Jesus taught us how it is not fitting for those who have once dedicated themselves to the Holy Spirit to have any traffic with godless spirits; he hushed their shouts and with threats as well enjoined their silence. For they realized that a wonderful power came from him, and so they suspected that he was the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

Jesus, however, had not come to heal bodies but hearts; nor had he come to one city but to every part of the whole world. When he had made a good sowing of the gospel philosophy in Capernaum by the miracles he had performed and by salutary teaching, he left Capernaum at first light, before the crowd, more impressed with and eager for the healing of bodies than the health of their souls, could flood out to him again. He withdrew into a desert place as if fleeing the mob of people. Here he taught us that miracles are not to be produced for show or to satisfy popular demand but only as far as favours the salvation of humankind and the glory of God; but suspicion of vainglory ought always to be avoided. For the fact that he had healed everyone was an example of his ready kindness to all; that he removed himself unnoticed was an example of his modesty, avoiding praise or making a show of himself.

Then by the time it was full daylight, a great mass of all kinds of people had poured out again, because of the magnitude of what had been done the day before. But when they learned that Jesus was already gone, many followed him, and when they found him, tried to stop him, urging him not to leave their city but to pick a permanent seat for himself there. That was surely no godless impulse; but more blessed are those who do not permit our Lord to leave his dwelling place in their heart, who call him back with prayers when he is preparing to go. Yet at that time the dispensation of the flesh he had assumed required that by frequently changing his location he spread his still new and fresh gospel teaching more and more widely. For he had been sent into the world as a sower to broadcast the seed of the gospel word, which would come to full fruition, though not equally productively, among all.

So to those calling him back he replied calmly in this way: 'Be satisfied that a benefit has been freely bestowed on you. I am not spurning your hospitality, but I must proclaim the kingdom of God to other towns also. Indeed, the Father has sent me not to preach to just one city but to invite everyone to a share in the heavenly kingdom.' What Jesus did then taught his disciples that they were to go throughout the world and teach all nations.[98] That was

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98 Echoing eg Matt 28:19, Mark 13:10 and 16:15

not the unhealthy condition of restlessness[99] but the eagerness to do good for many more people. Travelling about in this fashion is not a matter of human fickleness but of apostolic love.[100] Furthermore, where there is already plenty of gospel teaching, the watchful shepherd still does not stop going here and there, anxious for the flock entrusted to him, to call back the wanderer and to heal the diseased, to rescue one in bondage to wolves, to care for the wounded, to nurse the young and the weak. For the shepherd is not appointed to aid this family or that but to watch over all of them.

Having calmed the people of Capernaum with this explanation, Jesus made the rounds of the villages and towns of Galilee, preaching, as was his custom, in their synagogues, again and again winning faith in his teaching among the Jews by working miracles, since without miracles they were unable to believe anything.[101]

Chapter 5

Indeed, since Jesus' reputation was daily becoming more widely celebrated everywhere, the flood of people to him was so great that now it was not enough for him to make himself available in the synagogues, the hamlets, and the towns. In fact, no matter where he went, a mixed crowd of men and women instantly rushed to him there. The desire for healing had drawn many, the novelty of his miracles enticed some; the force of his heavenly teaching attracted the majority of them.[1] They were not put off by barren

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99 'Unhealthy condition of restlessness' is *morbus instabilitatis*. Stability is famously a Benedictine virtue, though as a traditional principle of life in a monastic community it spread much further than the Benedictines; it was his own prior's expectation that Erasmus was obliged to return to his home monastery that led Erasmus to defend himself as not truly suited to monastic life yet still endeavouring in his studies and travels to live in a way befitting his Christian commitment. See Ep 296 (1514).

100 The etymology of *apostolicus* 'apostolic' from ἀπόστολος 'apostle,' 'one who is dispatched with instructions,' suggests its association with the defence of travelling about.

101 Cf Matt 12:38–9, 1 Cor 1:22.

1 Hugh of St Cher (on 5:1) 157v describes the crowds who rush to Jesus: 'Some wanted to see strange miracles, the curious; others to be healed, the prudent; others to keep an eye on him, the jealous; and others to hear him, the eager to learn.' Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1717B, quoted by the *Catena aurea* (on 5:1), remarks on the crowd's not being restrained by either time or place from pursuing Jesus in search of healing; he also notes what Erasmus vividly expands on below: the lakeshore blocked him as they hemmed him in.

desert, by arduous climbing of hills; no sense of shame at bursting into a private house stopped them, if perhaps he had concealed himself there. Finally, when he reached the lake and was preparing to sail, even then they could not leave him alone. They streamed in from all sides, rushed up, burst in, clung fast, pressed hard.

Here, my dear Theophilus, be sure to open the eyes of your mind and perceive in the account of a concrete event an image of the church being born and growing vigorously.

Jesus was standing on the shore, close to Lake Gennesaret, which the Hebrews sometimes call a 'sea' because it stretches a great distance in length and breadth, and because, producing a breeze above itself, it is stirred by frequent waves.[2] He appeared to be on the point of sailing away. Yet the unrelenting flow of the crowd was pressing hard and looming over him, longing to hear the divine word from him. For many already disdained the word of the Pharisees because it had no flavour of anything beyond the human. This relentlessness did not displease our most gentle Lord, but, as if he were compelled and constrained, with the crowd of people pressing him on one side and the shoreline of the lake on the other, and since he saw that the location was hardly suitable for a preacher of the gospel – because the crowd, restlessly shoving each other about, could not easily stand still on the downhill slope, and a voice being projected from a low spot carries to only a few; then too it is fitting for a gospel preacher to be undisturbed and safe from the pressures of the general gathering – he withdrew to a less disturbed place.

For conveniently drawn up on the shore were two fishing vessels.[3] The fishermen themselves had left their boat and were washing their nets, as if preparing for the next fishing trip.

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2 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 381D–382A has a long discussion of the physical geography of Lake Gennesaret, including the Hebrew practice of calling such a large lake a 'sea' and the fact that curling surface waves produce a breeze above the water. Bede is quoted by the *Gloss* (on 5:1), more fully by Hugh of St Cher (on 5:1) 158r, and by Nicholas of Lyra (on 5:1), who omits the breeze and the waves. For 'lake' here Erasmus uses *lacus* rather than the *stagnum* of Luke's text, which suggests still water; Bede had pointed out that the behaviour of the water was not like a *stagnum*.

3 In paraphrasing verses 2–8 Erasmus speaks often of *navis* (the word for 'boat' in 5:2 Vulg) and a few times of *navicula* or *navigium*, all translated here 'boat' except when the 'ship' of the church is meant. But in this sentence and twice more in the paraphrase on 5:3 he uses *scalmus*, here translated '(fishing) vessel.' *Scalmus*, a classical but not common word, properly means 'oarlock.' Cicero *De*

When Jesus saw this, he got into one of them, which belonged to Simon Peter. He asked Simon to turn the vessel sideways a little distance offshore. Once that was done, having been removed in this way from the pressure of the crowd, he sat down and from the boat, as from a teacher's chair,[4] taught the people who stood on the shore.

The Lord had summoned fishermen to the office of gospel preaching. And now the very thing that Jesus was doing from the vessel was fishing for men.[5] The lake was the world, swelling up and down in all kinds of worldly motions. Simon's ship was the church, first gathered from the Jews and of which Simon Peter would be given charge; and 'Simon' means 'obedience.'[6] The Jews of course asked for signs and put their trust and hope of salvation in the works of the Law. On the other hand, the philosophers held discussions based on human reasoning concerning the highest good, by which they measure human happiness; whereas gospel teaching promises salvation by faith to all.[7] And faith is obedience. For that person is obedient who, when bidden to believe, does believe, with no hesitation, no discussion; who, when

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officiis 3.59 uses it by metonymy for a small fishing vessel. It also appears with that meaning in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1616B: in commenting on the preface to Luke, he cites Peter and Andrew, who on being called to be fishers of men left their *scalmum* and followed him, Matt 4:19–22 (the older Vulgate had *navis* in Matt 4:22). Jerome in a letter to Innocentius, now Ep 1 in his *Epistulae* PL 22 327, compared himself to a man who has never even sailed a *scalmum* in a lake yet now finds himself at the mercy of the crashing Euxine Sea. Erasmus' edition of Jerome's letters had a scholium on the word *scalmus* in that passage, which defines it as a smaller sort of *cymba* 'boat' or 'skiff,' *Omnia opera divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis* (Basel: Froben 1536) I fol 106v. (According to Virgil *Aeneid* 6.303, Charon uses a *cymba* to transport the dead to Hades.)

4 'As from a teacher's chair' (*veluti de cathedra*). See chapter 4 n51. Hugh of St Cher (on 5:3) 158v notes that Jesus taught from the boat 'as from a teacher's chair' (*quasi de cathedra magistri*). Cf the paraphrase on 5:17 with n31.

5 Cf Matt 4:19. Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 552D–553B notes that here Jesus himself acts like a fisherman, netting disciples who are experts in fishing themselves, and quotes Jer 16:16.

6 That the lake and its fluctuations represents the world is noted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 382A and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:1–2 *moraliter*) 158r. The identification of Simon's craft as a figure for the church drawn from the Jews is made by Bede just cited, the *Gloss* (on 5:2), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 760A, and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:1–2) 158r. The definition of 'Simon' as 'obedience' is given by Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 151 and 148.

7 Jews ask for signs and non-Jews use reason: 1 Cor 1:22. Jews trust in works of the Law: Rom 9:32 and Gal 2:16.

bidden to hope, hopes, relying completely on the will of the one to whose trustworthiness he has once and for all committed himself.[8]

Here you have the beginning of the church. Now listen to the haul that will come from gospel fishing.[9]

His gospel sermon completed, the Lord spoke to Simon, skipper of the little boat: 'Take your boat out further from land and go into deep water and there let down your nets to fish.' At this Simon, true to his name, replied as follows: 'Teacher, we worked all night fishing, and we didn't catch anything; so we were discouraged, and we have washed and mended the net. But at your bidding I will let the net down. The obedience will be mine; the outcome is up to you.'

They did as the Lord Jesus said; the boat was taken out into the deep water of the lake, the net was spread wide, and shortly such a huge number of fish was caught in it that the disciples' net, unequal to the weight of the fish, broke, and one boat was not enough to hold the catch. Simon's comrades were in the other boat. They motioned to them by signs, not voice, to come out and help unload the net. They came and helped; and the number of fish was found to be so large that both little boats were filled with the haul of one net, so much so that they were not far from being in danger of sinking from the load.[10]

In Simon you have the form and image of a gospel teacher. The teacher's proper and particular charge is to let down the net of gospel preaching

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8 Noël Béda criticized the identification of faith and obedience here. Erasmus replied in the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 492D–E, *Elenchus in censuras Bedae* LB IX 499B no 62, and *Supputatio* LB IX 610D–611B no 62, invoking the apostolic usage found in Rom 1:5, 2 Cor 10:5–6, Gal 3:1 and 5:7, 2 Thess 1:8, and 1 Pet 1:2, in which various Greek words could mean both 'obey' and 'believe.' 'Faith' and 'trustworthiness' are *fides*; cf the discussion of this term in chapter 1 n1.

9 Erasmus here begins development of a figure based on Matt 13:47–9.

10 'Not far from being in danger' (*parum abesset quin . . . periclitarentur*). The word *pene* 'almost' in the Vulgate text of 5:6 had been removed by Erasmus from his Latin revision. He had said in the *1516* and *1519* annotation *ita ut pene mergerentur* (on 5:7) that it was not found in Greek texts or in Latin ones he regarded as older and better; perhaps a reader had added it, being unwilling to think that the apostles were dying out there. Edward Lee took offence at Erasmus' light tone, in spite of the fact that the barb was directed at 'a reader,' not at Scripture; *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* 1 Note 47 CWE 72 156–7 and ASD VI-5 511 727n. In the paraphrase he retains the traditional idea but in a more sophisticated Latin expression.

– woven not from the snares of Pharisees or the clever arguments of philosophers but from the commandments of the Holy Bible and Christ's words and deeds, in such a way that he catches as many of his quarry as possible, and having caught them, does not let them slip away. This world too has its nets; Satan too has his fishermen, to throw poor souls pulled in by their blandishments into their creel of misery and drag them to everlasting destruction. But blessed are the souls whom the apostles' net catches and draws from the depths of misdeeds and missteps to a freer atmosphere, from darkness to light, from filthy mud to purer life, from roaming lusts to constant eagerness for lasting innocence. For they are drawn not to slaughter but to salvation. They are caught in such a fashion that they have no wish to slip away; and, if they were to slip away, they would be lost. They are encircled on all sides by the netting of gospel truth, they acknowledge their critical situation, and they rejoice that they are being drawn to the ship of the church.[11]

Yet since the preacher's net sometimes draws and catches all kinds of fish from anywhere, bad fish are necessarily mixed with the good. So the net is torn because of the bad ones, but the good ones do not slip away for that reason. Heretics try to cut the gospel teaching apart, but Christ always encloses his own on every side and turns the godless attempts of heretics to the advantage of the sound part. Some weigh the ship down and make it rock with their tossing and turning because they are heavy with the passions of this world and they want to return to the slime they have left.[12] But the ship that Christ has once honoured with his gaze is unsinkable. Furthermore, though there is only a single church throughout the world, the figure for it still has two ships so that we may understand that the church of Christ has been gathered from two peoples. The beginning of salvation came from the Jews; there Peter first of all after Christ cast the net of gospel teaching, and

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11 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1718C likewise takes Peter as a model teacher and compares the nets of the fishermen to the gospel preachers' figurative construction of nets of words, a comparison also used or assumed by others in the exegetical tradition. See eg Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.2 PL 35 1333–4, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 553B–D, the *Gloss* (on 5:6), and the whole discussion of 5:1–11 by Hugh of St Cher 158r–159r, especially (on 5:6) 158v. Ambrose, the *Gloss*, and Hugh also point out the security of the net provided by Christ through gospel preachers and that it draws to life, not death.

12 The idea that breaks in the net are disruption in the church caused by heretics and dissenters is found in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1720, Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.2 PL 35 1333–4, Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 24 PL 76 1185C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 383D citing Gregory, the *Gloss* (on 5:6), and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:6) 158v citing Bede. See also n9.

in one cast drew in three thousand of all kinds of people, clearly playing the part of a fisher of men.[13] His speech was not woven with the arts of the rhetoricians, not shot through with the subtleties of philosophers' arguments; but by the power of the Holy Spirit it was strong and effective. For he had let down his net not trusting in human capability but only at the command of Christ, by whose spirit the action was being done. Otherwise the net is released in vain if Christ does not bless a human's throw.

But just as the beginning of this haul came from the Jews, likewise an abundance was added from the gentiles, so much so that those who were first to let down their nets were compelled to beg for their comrades' help. For later, with gentiles breaking in from all sides to share in gospel salvation, Peter and James joined forces with Paul and Barnabas, a mark of the gospel fellowship, and each pair, according to its own passion, tried to fill both the ships, and the whole business rose to the level of a miracle.[14]

So when Simon saw that this fishing was happening not by human strength or by chance but by Jesus' divine power, he again showed in his own action what an apostolic teacher must do whenever the work of preaching turns out profitably. For though the boat was his and he had cast his own net, though he had been first to draw up the net, he still claimed no credit for himself from these facts. Made even more modest from the size of his success, he fell at Jesus' knees and ascribed to him all the glory of this deed, confessed himself nothing but a sinner, unworthy to be a minister and instrument of divine power; 'Lord, now indeed I admit my unworthiness when I regard your loftiness. Depart from me, for I am unworthy of your fellowship.' It was not some wish to depart from the company of the Lord, whom he loved like no other, that forced these words from Peter, but a kind of intense amazement at power more than human. And Simon's companions were affected no differently than Simon himself. For an extraordinary amazement at this event had

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13 Acts 2:14–41

14 The two ships represent the two parts, Jewish and gentile, of the church. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1719B–1720A says that the two boats in this episode are either the church (Peter's boat) and the synagogue (James' and John's boat) or two churches. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 382A, 382C, and 383A–D says that the two represent the circumcised and the uncircumcised and the fishermen, the Doctors of the church (382A); he adds that Paul and Barnabas were set apart for the mission to the gentiles (382C); see Acts 13:2. Erasmus here adds Peter and James for the mission to the Jews; see Gal 2:7–9. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 760A says Peter's boat is the synagogue; Hugh of St Cher (on 5:7) 159r says the two boats are the church of the gentiles and the synagogue, ie the primitive church formed by converted Jews.

seized the hearts of them all; but none of them claimed anything for himself from it. For they recognized that the work was their own, but the good haul belonged to him who had given the instructions.[15]

Besides, who would not be dumbstruck on reflecting that because of the preaching of only a few humble and uneducated men out of all the nations of the world, in a few years' time so many thousands of people, despite the feelings of their kinfolk, despite the dispersal of their inherited wealth, despite the threats of princes, despite punishments and even death itself, had been persuaded to follow the simple teaching of Christ: believing things that cannot be verified by human reason, hoping for things that, according to the powers of nature, are plainly hopeless? A bishop, then, must be ready and quick to let down his net so he can strive to gain as many people for Christ as possible. But he will let that net down not for his own glory, not for monetary gain, not at a prince's bidding, not at some human whim, but at the bidding and behest of Christ, who does not bid the net be let down except for the salvation of those who are caught and for the glory of God's goodness. For precisely this is an apostle's fishing. Although it is carried out through the services of a human voice and effort, yet the sum of all the praise is to be ascribed to Christ alone, by whose will the tongue is loosed for speaking, whose spirit inspires the breast of the speaker, whose hidden force draws the hearts of the hearers. And even if the teacher could rightly take something from it for himself, it is in any case safer to refer the whole thing to Christ, for only by his aid does any progress towards salvation follow on a human's effort. He knows nothing of taking away what he has given; he knows nothing of casting reproaches for what he has bestowed.[16] If you are willing for what could somehow seem your own to be his, all the more will he want it to be yours. He will allow the good use [of his gift] to be yours but he will not permit the glory to be given except to God alone. And if we like to boast, we will boast more securely in him.

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15 Erasmus calls Peter's sense of amazement at what he has experienced *admiratio*. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1720B, quoted in the *Gloss* (on 5:9), says that Peter 'is amazed' (*admiratur*) at the divine gifts. The same sense of wonder expressed in other terms is noted by Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.2, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 383D and the *Gloss* (on 5:8), and the *Catena aurea* (on 5:8) quoting both Ambrose and Augustine.

16 'Knows nothing of casting reproaches for what he has bestowed' (*non novit exprobrare quod largitus est*). The thought, and a bit of the language, parallels what the god Mercury says about his father Jupiter: 'But it was never my father's habit to cast reproaches for [*exprobrare*] the good that he does for good people'; Plautus *Amphitryo* prologue 46–7.

But when amazement at the deed so astonished everyone who had been with Peter in catching the fish (among whom were James and John, sons of Zebedee and Simon's comrades) that for amazement at his divine power they did not dare to attach themselves to Jesus, the Lord comforted them. He said to Peter, in whom he often put forward a model of what he wanted to impress on the minds of all the others, 'There is nothing for you to fear, Simon. You recognize your own weakness, and you have firsthand knowledge of God's power. This power is to be loved, not feared. For it does not display what it can do in order to squelch the weakness of sinners but to raise it up, only so that you may heed my commandments and calculate not what your own strength can do but what I want done. Nothing will fail if you trust me. You are amazed that things went so well in the catch of fish. This is trivial indeed; there will be more miraculous success when you start fishing for men. I have chosen you and your comrades for this kind of fishing. For now, enough of your ordinary fishing; in future you will put your effort not into filling a boat with fish but into filling my church with proclaimers of the gospel teaching.' Everyone understood that what the Lord said to Peter was said to them as well.

And so soon, with the boats pulled up onto land and all the gear left there, they followed Jesus, free from concern for material things and wholeheartedly bent on becoming fishers of men.[17] For this glorious mission they had to be formed by instruction and trained by examples with mystical meaning.

In order, therefore, for Jesus to show that no fault is so disgusting, so deserving of condemnation, that it cannot be forgiven on the spot for a person who acknowledges his disease and in gospel faith begs for a cure from Jesus the heavenly physician, a particular event took place. In a certain city there was a man not just lightly blemished with leprosy but full of a most disgusting scaliness all over his body. To the Jews this class of persons was so abhorrent that they were sequestered from association with other people and the Law forbade touching them because of the real risk of contagion.[18]

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17 Erasmus does not engage here with a point made in the tradition, that Jesus' followers in 5:11 have been called to fellowship but not yet formally invited to discipleship (reported later in Luke, at 6:12–16). See Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.2 PL 35 1333–4 and *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.41 PL 34 1097, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 384A–B; also Hugh of St Cher (on 5:11) 159r and Nicholas of Lyra (on 5:11).

18 For Jewish regulations about leprosy, see Leviticus 13; sequestration is covered in verse 46. Rules against touching what is ritually unclean for whatever reason are found at eg Leviticus 11, 15, and 22; Numbers 9.

But leprosy of the heart is more disgusting and loathsome than that of the body. The Jews indeed were themselves oozing with faults beneath their skin; still, they cursed gentiles, tax collectors, and known sinners so strongly that whenever they happened to speak to these, they went home and washed off their whole body as if they had handled something contagious.[19] Christ wanted his disciples to be as separate as possible from this arrogant Jewish cleanliness. So it did the sufferer good to have seen Jesus. He recognized his own uncleanness and judged himself unworthy to lift to the Lord a loathsome face with its disgusting white sores, but prostrated himself face down in shame and spoke in a voice full of modesty and trust at the same time. That he concealed his face was the mark of one who recognized his own evil; that he asked to be cleansed was the mark of a man trusting in Jesus Christ's almighty and all-welcoming goodness. 'Lord,' he said, 'I know my trouble is incurable and perhaps I am not deserving of your kindness, but still I am convinced that you can cleanse me if you wish. You have my trust in your power; it remains for your goodness to decide whether it wishes to honour this unfortunate and lamentable man with its mercy.'[20] There could be no fuller trust in the Lord than to acknowledge his power and leave to him the decision to grant a kindness, for he knows that sometimes it is in our own interest to be afflicted with bodily ills and a good outcome in temporal matters is not useful.

But delighted by the absolute trust of the wretched man, Jesus not only did not shift his gaze from him but raised him from his prostrate position, and stretching out his hand, touched his face, saying, 'If you seek my goodness, I do wish; and because you admit my power, be clean.' And at that word the leprosy with which he had been covered departed from his entire body.

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19 For the Pharisees' rules about ritual washing, see Matt 15:1–2 and Mark 7:3–4, with the paraphrases on these verses, CWE 45 231 and 49 89 respectively. 'Were themselves oozing with faults beneath their skin' (*ipsi vitiis intercutibus maderent*) is a phrase substantially identical to one made by the philosopher Macedo about self-styled 'philosophers' who lazily do no real study of moral philosophy but *ipsi vitiis madentes* 'oozing with faults themselves,' only use philosophical jargon to attack the faults of others; Gellius *Noctes Atticae* 13.8.5.

20 The leper's sense of shame, identified with the loathsomeness of his disease, and his prostration before Jesus is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1720D–1721A. He and other exegetes comment also on the completeness of the leper's trust in the face of his incurable disease, evidenced by his express surrender to Jesus' will: Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 556A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 384B–C, the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 5:12) citing Ambrose and Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 760C–D, Hugh of St Cher (on 5:12) 159v, and the *Catena aurea* (on 5:12).

Here disciples learn how wrong it is to shun any person, no matter how bound by egregious and detestable sins, provided only that the sinner recognize his disease and seek a cure from the goodness of Christ. For if the Lord, who alone was free from any leprosy of vices, honours with his touch a person shunned by everyone, how much less fitting it is for disciples whom the Lord's goodness has cleansed of sin – disciples who are not entirely free from faults and also can slide into every outrageous crime – to reject expending effort on healing the diseases of others! Contact of this kind does not sully the one doing the touching; rather, it cleanses the one touched. The one who is touched becomes clean at once; and the one who touches becomes no more unclean, provided that Jesus deigns to do the touching through his apostle's hand.[21]

Furthermore, since the Law assigned judgment in matters of leprosy not to just anyone but only to priests, the Lord did not want news of this miracle to be spread only by popular rumour. Rather, so that confidence in it might be more certain, he forbade the healed man to spread news immediately of the benefit received but instructed him, according to the requirement of the Law, to go first to the priest by whose judgment he had been pronounced unclean and removed from association with other people. 'And if,' he said, 'he inspects your body and judges that you are truly clean, make the offering that the law of Moses requires to be made by those to whom release from leprosy has come. In this way the result will be equally that the priests cannot complain that their profit is shrinking because of me, or that the Law has been broken or scorned, for I came to fulfil it, not to destroy it;[22] and they cannot put my good deed in a false light, either by denying that you were a leper or by judging that you have not been healed. For the case itself will promptly supply an answer to them:[23] "If he was not a leper, why did you who claim for yourselves skill in judging pronounce him a leper and remove

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21 A moral lesson here for 'disciples' (ie bishops and other clergy) is pointed out by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1721B–C, who says, 'The evangelists included many such incidents, for they wanted to give us a strong foundation in both points, describing the signs of power for our faith and the works of power for our imitation . . . If therefore the word is the cure for leprosy, then contempt for the word is mental leprosy. But so that leprosy is not transferred to the doctor, let each one avoid boastfulness, on the model of the Lord's humility.'

22 For 'to fulfil it, not to destroy it,' see Matt 5:17. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1722B and Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 25 (26) PG 57 330 make the same point.

23 *Res ipsa respondebit* 'The case itself will supply an answer' is a variation, or a paraphrase, on the familiar *res ipsa loquitur*; cf *Adagia* III iv 49 *Res indicabit* 'The facts will show.' See also chapter 2 n57 and chapter 3 n12.

him from communal life? But if he is not clean, why have you accepted the offering prescribed by the Law as if from one who has been cleansed?"' The Lord Jesus gave these instructions so carefully that it was evident to all that one greater than the Law had come, one who without the Law's assistance, by just a word, just a nod, at his own discretion could bestow complete cleanness, and who so removed the uncleanness of all who presented themselves for healing through faith that he himself was not infected by contact with anyone; and he aided everyone freely, whereas the priests did not even pronounce judgment about the restoration of bodily purity for free. Certainly the priests of Moses neither caused leprosy nor took it away but only passed judgment about its occurrence or removal.[24] But Jesus alone takes away every kind of sickness from everyone,[25] demanding no other sacrifice than pure and simple trust in him: that we recognize the divine power in him by which he is able to do whatever he wishes; that we adore in him the ineffable goodness and mercy with which he desires all sinners to be saved without charge, expending from his own resources what was required in sacrifice for the expiation of their sins.

Then as for what our Lord Jesus enjoined on the man cleansed from his leprosy, that he not tell anyone what had happened (though he knew that the man was not going to keep quiet):[26] here he provided a model for his disciples, not to seek any breath of glory among mortals from their acts of kindness. For the things that God works through us are not our own, nor will it be fitting to seek any praise for them as a reward; but we will quietly congratulate our neighbour who has benefited and give God all the glory, going to such lengths in claiming nothing for ourselves from the benefit that, as for what pertains to us, we even want the fact that a divine benefit has come to our neighbour by our service to be known to no one. Not even one who has

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24 For the limitations of Jewish priests, who neither cause nor cure, cf Hebrews 7–9. Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 1 PL 26 52C says that Jesus sends the leper to the priest to forestall any claim that the man had never been a leper or complaint about not receiving what was due a priest.

25 Noël Béda took exception to this statement because it seemed to challenge the efficacy of Christian practices such as repentance for sins after baptism, penances such as satisfaction or other good works, or even priestly absolution. In the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 492E–F, *Elenchus in censuras Bedae* LB IX 449B, *Declarationes* CWE 82 170, and *Supputatio* LB IX 611B–E Erasmus argued that Christian priests are ministers, not authors, of the actions they perform; and that he does not mean modern-day priests when he compares Jesus to OT priests, for he speaks in the person of Luke.

26 Cf Mark 1:45.

experienced a benefit should give praise for it to the person through whom he received it, but he should thank God its originator, who deigns to lavish such great gifts on mortals through his servants. Besides, glory more blessedly pursues the one who flees it, and unsought glory comes more splendidly. Indeed true glory is that which virtue herself attaches to one who does not want it and tries to escape it, and which is not delivered by popular acclaim nor coerced by self-advertisement. It is that which one who earned it does not himself recognize, but which is spontaneously offered by a simplicity that knows nothing of servile fawning.[27]

From marvellous deeds of this kind the Lord Jesus' reputation daily grew brighter and brighter, as those who had seen and heard them told others, and these in turn handed on by word of mouth to still others what they had gotten from their informants. So crowds of people poured in from all sides, more every day, partly to hear such effective teaching that heals all soul sicknesses, partly so that those who were bound by bodily sickness might be healed by Jesus' power. For thickheaded people were more amazed by things visible than by what they did not see. They considered it really remarkable and superhuman that a leper's skin had been made clean by the touch of a hand, though it is a far greater and more divine good deed to use the gospel's medicine to drive out of a heart the fever of foul lust, the dropsy of greed, the demon of self-seeking, and other deadly spiritual plagues.

But teaching us by his action that good works are not to be done for theatrical showing off or to the point of surfeit, Jesus withdrew to the desert. There, removed from the press of people, he was free for prayer, giving thanks to God the Father for the benefits he was bestowing on mortals through his Son. In fact the result of this alternation is that, first, the interruption of beneficence prevents any sense of surfeit, and arouses a hunger for it. Then too, one who withdraws from people to converse with God returns better fitted and more cheerful to his interrupted duty. And the Lord Jesus so arranged his whole life that often he wanted to demonstrate to us a pattern for living and played the part of a mortal, and sometimes he displayed marks of his divine nature. Indeed, nothing refreshes a gospel teacher more, nothing guards and arms him better against every corrupting influence of this

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27 That Jesus tells the healed leper to tell no one but to go to the priest first is explained in the tradition as a model for the disciples to follow, concealing their good deeds and avoiding glory-seeking, though Jesus knew the man would talk about it eventually. See Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 25 (26) PG 57 329, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 385D–386A quoting Gregory the Great *Moralia* 19 PL 76 120C–121D, the *Gloss* (on 5:14), and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:14–15) 160r.

life, than frequent retreat from the crowd – not for idleness, play, or pleasure, as the retreats of the wealthy of this world generally are, but for reading the Holy Bible, for pure prayer, for thanksgiving, for contemplation of heavenly things, and also for cleansing the heart, if perhaps it has contracted some blemish from living with other people. Christ had no need of these things, but he wished to show us the pattern in himself. A pastor's continuous living with his people frequently produces contempt, and one who permanently removes himself from traffic with humankind cannot be of any use [to them]. So the man of the gospel will come forward whenever the people need the food of the gospel word, whenever worsening diseases demand a healer's help. Again, when they have been sufficiently fed, when the ills of many have been relieved, lest familiarity breed contempt,[28] lest abundance breed scorn, let him withdraw into his private place, so that from more sacred studies as from conversing with God he may return, always better and stronger than himself, to helping his neighbours.[29]

In this way, then, our Lord Jesus returned to Capernaum from his retreat and restored himself to everyone's already aroused longing.[30] As he was teaching there in a private house (of course, wherever Christ sits and teaches, the church is there), not just ordinary folk had poured into it but Pharisees too, swollen with the appearance of holiness, and also teachers of the law of Moses, who, drawn out by the report of Jesus' deeds had come here not just from all the towns of Galilee, where Capernaum was, and of neighbouring Judea but also from the city of Jerusalem itself, which claimed to be the pinnacle of all religion and wisdom. Now since Jesus was the source of all salvation, his whole person breathed nothing but a divine force for

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28 The saying 'Familiarity breeds contempt' has already appeared in the paraphrase on 4:31, 153.

29 Jesus' withdrawal for prayer offered traditional exegetes an opportunity to remark on the importance for pastors of balancing the active life of works with contemplative withdrawal for prayer and sacred study; see Gregory the Great *Moralia* 28 PL 76 467B–C, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 386B–C, the *Gloss* (on 5:16) quoting Bede, Hugh of St Cher (on 5:16) 160r, the *Catena aurea* (on 5:16) quoting a different passage in Gregory and another from Gregory of Nazianzus, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 5:16). Most of these mention Jesus' action serving as a pattern for behaviour which he does not himself need, and make reference to a pastor's temptation to show off to the crowds. See also the paraphrase on John 6:3 CWE 46 75–6.

30 Capernaum is named as the place to which Jesus returns in Mark 2:1, but not in either Matthew or Luke, as noted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 386B–C, followed by the *Gloss* (on 5:17), Hugh of St Cher (on 5:17) 160r, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 5:17).

healing humankind, and for that reason he had come to earth. And the more important part of human nature demanded his first attention. By his speaking he healed spiritual sicknesses. Therefore he had first taught while seated, claiming, as was his due, the rightful authority of a teacher.[31] There remained the dispelling of bodily sickness, which, since it was exposed to the eyes of all, could establish trust in those things that were being carried out in hearts with greater profit and greater power but not so visibly.

And look, here there was ready material for putting his power to use. For there was a paralysed man tied fast to a bed, who was being carried by four bearers.[32] The force of his disease was so great that all the muscles of his whole body were seized up and the poor fellow could do nothing but lie there and be carried about just like a corpse. Though even in other cases this kind of disease is such that doctors generally struggle with it without much success, yet the bearers' confidence in Jesus was so great that they were sure that he (for whom, they knew, no disease was incurable) would take pity on the unusual misfortune once he saw it and would give his help. The hard part in this was only to get the poor fellow before Jesus' eyes. Certainly a person is already very near to healing when he has left the hiding places of sin and presents himself, wretch that he is, to Jesus' sight, acknowledging his own misfortune and awaiting Jesus' kindheartedness.[33]

But the close-packed crowd, which blocks many who would otherwise hasten to salvation, prevented them from bringing him to Jesus' feet. Now

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31 Luke has Jesus teaching while seated at 2:46, 4:20, 5:3, and in some Greek manuscript traditions and older versions of the Vulgate here at 5:17 as well; see Erasmus' *1519* annotation *et ipse sedebat docens* (on 5:17) ASD VI-5 512 and Nestle-Aland on the verse. Erasmus has *sedebat* in the Vulgate version of his *1527* NT but not in his own revision or in the Greek. He again draws attention to the posture as a mark of the teacher's authority; cf the paraphrase on 4:20 n51 and also the paraphrase on Matt 9:1 CWE 45 151 with n5. He will make the point again in the paraphrase on 8:4 233 and will also comment on Jesus' regular practice of healing souls through teaching before turning to healing illnesses of the body; cf the paraphrase on 9:17.

32 The detail that there were four bearers, rather than an unspecified number, is supplied by Mark 2:3, as noted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 387A–B. Nicholas of Lyra (on 5:17) points out that Luke's version of the episode contains what is said in Matthew 9 about the cure of the paralysed man, while it supplements the method of his reaching the Lord from what is reported in Mark 2 (ie the number of bearers and their removal of part of the roof).

33 Interpretation of the paralysed man as a figure of the sinner is made explicit by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1722C–1723A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 387A, the *Gloss* (on 5:17), and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:19 *mystice*) 160r–v.

that situation, though it delayed entry, nonetheless shed light on both the bearers' and the paralysed man's great longing, and their trust as well. For though God is by nature inclined to take pity on everyone, still he sometimes delays his kindness in order to sharpen our longing and teach us that we must try everything to be freed from our soul's diseases. He loves our persistence, by which he is, in a way, propelled to that to which he is in his own nature most inclined. So, look with me, please, at what the bearers dared, or rather what the paralysed man wrenched out of them. They brought their load up to the very roof, and stripping it away, they lowered the paralysed man, tied fast to the bed as he was, on ropes as through a window, into the midst of the crowd before Jesus' feet. What is more shameless than to remove the roof tiles of someone else's house and to shift so abhorrent a spectacle into such a theatre?[34] Now the crowd that refused to make room for the poor man at the door was forced to give way to him when he came down from overhead. And in the middle of all this what did that most gentle physician do? He did not reproach their shamelessness and impetuous behaviour; he was not irritated that his words had been interrupted by an ugly sight. The bearers looking down from the roof asked nothing; the paralysed man, whose disease had deprived him of the ability to speak, asked nothing. And the fact that he could not speak spoke the more to the merciful physician. There was no need for prayers; the pitiable sight demanded pity; and what the bearers had done made clear enough what they hoped for from the Lord.

So Jesus observed their amazing confidence and did more than they were expecting. The sum of their prayers was that the paralysed man be released from his bodily disease.[35] But Jesus, showing that release from sickness

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34 Erasmus' language of 'spectacle' *spectaculum* and 'theatre' *theatrum* (Latin for Greek θέατρον) may be related to the remarks on this episode by Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 29 (30) PG 57 359 and Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 564B–C, who both use θέατρον, probably in the sense of 'audience,' 'spectators collectively.'

35 Erasmus includes the faith and longing of the paralysed man, and his inability to speak – but by implication not a failure of his understanding – as part of the faith that Jesus sees expressed without words in 5:20. The exegetical tradition has different views. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1722D–1723B says that the spiritually sick person should summon intercessors but also learn to ask for what he needs, while the companions of such a one should undertake intercession when they observe the need of their comrade. Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 29 (30) PG 57 358 says that the 'faith' in verse 20 is the bearers' but also the paralytic's since he let himself be lowered through the roof. But Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 1 PL 26 56B–C says specifically that Jesus responds to the faith of the bearers, not to that of the man they transported; Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 564D–565A says the same, adding that sometimes intercession is what produces

of soul is more divine and more to be sought, turned to the paralysed man and said, 'Man, your sins are forgiven you.'[36]

Since these words clearly expressed some divine power, they disturbed the hearts of the scribes and Pharisees, who were ever ready to malign. The priests, indeed, who offered sacrifices for sins, did not themselves forgive sins but with their prayers only interceded before God to pardon sinners for their sins. But Jesus, without priestly burnt offerings, without prayers, as with an everlasting authority of his own, said, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' embracing in one general term the sum and substance of all sins at once, though the priests saw to the expiation, by sacrificial victims, not of all sins but of certain specific acts of wrongdoing.[37] Isaiah had taught them that it is God alone who pardons sins freely. For so he says through the mouth of his prophet: 'I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake; and I will not remember your sins' [Isa 43:25].[38] But though they saw in him marks of divine power, still, offended by the weakness of the body that they saw, and partly also blinded by jealousy, the scribes and Pharisees preferred to malign rather than to believe. For in silent thoughts they spoke within themselves in the following way, and, as is the nature of Pharisaic slander, they disguised their vast ungodliness with a show of godliness and enthusiasm for God's

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healing – but then adds that it could be the faith of both the patient and his bearers. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 764B says the story demonstrates that the sick are sometimes healed by the faith of others. The interlinear *Gloss* (on 5:20) says that the faith is not the paralytic's since he lacked *sensus* 'sense,' but does not clarify whether failure of physical capacity or of mental understanding is meant; the remark is quoted by Hugh of St Cher (on 5:20) 160V.

36 'Forgiven' here is *remittuntur*. The paraphrase and the Vulgate use the same verb, but in verses 21, 23, and 24 the Vulgate returns to *dimittere*, the word it more commonly uses for 'forgive,' while the paraphrase on 5:21–4 uses forms of *remittere* five more times. The Greek in all instances is ἀφιέναι 'send away, let go, release.' Erasmus had argued that *remittere*, not *dimittere*, was the better choice; see his annotation *et dimitte* (on Matt 6:12), much revised in the printing history of the *Annotations*, and the paraphrase on that verse, CWE 45 118 with n29; and the paraphrase on Luke 6:37 199 with the note there. His arguments for *remittere* cite passages of the OT, NT, various church fathers, and the Latin of the Apostles' Creed. In classical Latin *remittere* has more the connotation of 'forgive' and *dimittere* more that of 'send away, dismiss.' The latter verb also figured in controversy over the paraphrase on 4:39 157 with n92.

37 For the defined powers of Jewish priests see Leviticus in general and Hebrews 9–10.

38 The quotation from Isaiah, but only through 'transgressions,' is cited here by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 388B, who also adds a quotation from 1 Kings (Vulg 3 Kings) 8:39: 'Only you know what is in every human heart.'

glory (for no ungodliness is more pernicious): 'Who is that man,' they said, 'who speaks blasphemy, claiming for himself what belongs to God? For who can forgive sins except God alone?'

Then, so that in this area too our Lord Jesus might show that he shared in the divine nature of God, he replied to their silent thoughts in this way: 'Why are you thinking those things in your hearts? Do you judge that it is easier to say to one bound by sin, "Your sins are forgiven you," or to say to this man you see completely undone by paralysis, "Rise and walk"? But if you see bodily health suddenly restored by a single word to a person as good as dead, believe that with equal ease his soul also is restored to its health. From what you see with your eyes, believe what cannot be discerned by sight. Do not let the weakness of this body offend you, but recognize divine power from its very effects. Therefore, accept visible proof that the Son of Man has within himself permanent and personal power to forgive on earth the sins of everyone who in simple trust seeks his aid.'[39] And at the same time, while they were alert and attentive, the Lord said to the paralysed man, 'I tell you, rise, take up your bed and go to your house.'

Without delay, before the eyes of all the paralysed man stood up, and raising to his shoulders the pallet on which he had lain, went off on his own feet to his house. So suddenly had his bodily strength been recovered that one who earlier was carried flat on his back by four bearers was now actually equal to carrying his own bed. Further, he went off completely sound in soul and body, lively and quick, glorifying God, by whose goodness he had been restored when there was no hope of health from mortals.

But the people, shaken by the strange sight, were thoroughly dumbstruck, and many praised God, who had given so much power to a human being (for so far they suspected nothing other than that about Jesus). Some, however, conscious of their own wrongdoing, were also gripped by fear, not understanding that Christ had come not to destroy the guilty but to make them guiltless.[40] And they were saying to each other, 'We have seen mar-

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39 That Jesus proves his divinity to the Pharisees in this episode by knowing what they are thinking and also by confirming his ability to forgive sins through the analogy of his power to effect a physical cure is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1723B–C, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 29 (30) PG 57 359, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 568A, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 5:23), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 764C–D, and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:22–4) 160V.

40 'Guilty . . . guiltless' represents Erasmus' play on words in *nocens* . . . *innocens*. For the thought, not the wordplay, see 6:9, with John 3:17 and 12:47. Erasmus might also have thought of Luke 9:56, in a Latin version of his day but not read in modern texts. See chapter 9 n46.

vellous things today that we never heard of or read about.' The people are amazed and afraid, and here there is some step towards salvation; but the Pharisees mutter and are jealous.

After he had taught near the lake (teaching that there was no place where the seeds of the gospel word should not be scattered), Jesus left that place; and as he went by he caught sight of a tax collector named Matthew, who was also called Levi the son of Alphaeus, sitting in his tax booth.[41] That did not happen by accident; rather, the seeing was choosing. For he chose a tax collector for the fellowship of the apostles in order to teach his followers that no class of persons was to be excluded from proclamation of the gospel, provided that once having left the pursuits of their earlier life they gave themselves completely to godliness. So he said to him, 'Follow me.'

And at Jesus' voice, as if transformed by a powerful enchantment into a different person, he stood up, and leaving everything behind, just as he was, he followed the Lord. That a person devoted to dishonourable gain and tied up in convoluted business dealings should suddenly turn into someone else – this was already a more remarkable miracle than that a paralysed man should have his muscles restored. And by then the Pharisees were galled by the very fact that Jesus scorned them and associated with tax collectors,

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Drawing on the intervention of the scribes and Pharisees reported in 5:21, Erasmus here divides the people of verse 26 into two groups: those who praised God and those who feared for themselves, ie Pharisees, as he will say in the next sentence. There is no sign of such a division in verse 26 itself or in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1724C (partly quoted by the *Catena aurea* on 5:26) or Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 29 (30) PG 57 360–1. Erasmus had done the same thing in the paraphrase on the parallel passage in Matt 9:8 CWE 45 153–4, though there he identified the scribes as the fearful group, and would do it again in paraphrasing Mark 2:12 CWE 49 34.

41 The detail that Jesus was teaching 'near the lake' comes from 'by the sea' at Mark 2:13; see the paraphrase on verse 1 with n1. 'As he went by' is a detail reported in Matt 9:9 and Mark 2:14, but not in Luke.

Luke names the tax collector in verses 27 and 29 only as Levi. In Matt 9:9 he is named only Matthew, and in Mark 2:14 he is called Levi the son of Alphaeus. Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 1 PL 26 57B–C says that Luke and Mark wanted to show respect for the disciple Matthew by not using his familiar name in this episode, only his other name, but that Matthew himself, in his Gospel, called himself by that name and identified himself as a tax collector to show readers that no one need despair of salvation if even a tax collector can leave his former life and be turned into a believer and apostle on the spot. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 389A quotes Jerome and is followed in turn by the *Gloss* (on 5:27); the same point is made by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 765A and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:27) 161r.

for the Jews thought themselves defiled by dealings with tax collectors. But something else was added to make their jealousy erupt.

For having now become a disciple of Christ, Matthew prepared a magnificent banquet at his house. Jesus did not think it beneath him to go there with his disciples. Furthermore, a large number of tax collectors was invited at the same time, for as Matthew had had them as comrades in his earlier undertaking, so he wanted to have them as followers of his new undertaking.[42] Observing that, the Pharisees and scribes no longer held back the godless grumbling of their heart, yet they did not dare to address the Lord. But they did speak to the disciples and abuse their teacher to them, intending to separate them from him. They said, 'While it is fitting for holy persons to have dealings with holy persons, why do you people not only permit conversation with tax collectors and openly disgraced sinners but even eat and drink with them at their houses in a friendly way, and do not avoid sharing their table, no ordinary mark of friendship?'

But Jesus, understanding where this godless grumbling was headed, answered them on behalf of the disciples:[43] 'Why are you maligning me on the grounds that I keep company with tax collectors and sinners? Indeed there is no one with whom it is more fitting for me to have dealings. For among whom is it more fitting for a doctor to busy himself than among the sick?

'I came for the purpose of healing the souls of sinners in bondage to grave illnesses. And these open sinners acknowledging their own disease and therefore summoning the doctor are more likely to be healed than others who think they are in good health, advertising themselves among humankind in a show of righteousness, though inwardly they struggle with graver ills

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42 That Matthew had invited his fellow tax collectors is not specifically said in the synoptic accounts, which all say only that the others were also present; besides here, Erasmus specifies an invitation in the paraphrases on Matt 9:10 CWE 45 155 and Mark 2:15 CWE 49 39. Only here and in the paraphrase on the episode in Mark does he mention Matthew's wish to maintain fellowship with his old companions. Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 30 (31) PG 57 363 and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 765B draw the reasonable conclusion that Matthew had issued an invitation, Chrysostom attributing it to Jesus' wish for the others to be converted. Hugh of St Cher (on 5:29) 161v says, 'Matthew invites these [tax collectors] to have as companions in his repentance those whom he had as companions in sinfulness.'

43 Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.27 comments that in speaking to the disciples the Pharisees and scribes intended their criticism to apply mainly to the teacher, and that Luke demonstrates his sensitivity to the point by having Jesus speak on the disciples' behalf. Erasmus will add in the second paragraph 181 below that the disciples are not yet trained in dealing with adversarial challenges.

and are more incurably sick than those whose disease is public knowledge. Therefore, since I am a doctor, it is not reasonable for the righteous (as they think they are) to resent me if I do not keep company with them, since the healthy have no need of a doctor. After all, the truly righteous ought not hold a grudge against sinners who are trying to be restored to a better life. If they do so, they are no less to be condemned than if a healthy person resents a doctor who is visiting a patient in order to ease him in his sickness. For in matters of the heart, one who begrudges health for a sick person is not healthy himself; and one who does not relieve his neighbour's illness when he can is himself in the grip of a disease.'

In this answer, so gentle and so commendable, the Lord Jesus came to the defence of his disciples (who were not yet adequately trained in refuting the malicious quibbles of Pharisees and scribes); he also taught that his friendliness towards sinners was mercy, not support for unrighteousness. And without a word, yet definitively, he proved the arrogance of those who with great disdain looked down on other people though they themselves were incurably godless for just this reason, that they were mistakenly self-satisfied on the ground of their religiosity.

But calumny follows calumny.[44] This one arose partly from those who were disciples of John. For while John was the dividing line between the Law that would soon cease and the gospel of freedom that would soon arise,[45] he was passing on certain things that were not entirely at odds with the precepts of the Pharisees.[46] Meanwhile Christ, who in the opinion of many seemed to

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44 'Calumny follows calumny' (*calumnia calumniam excipit*) has the flavour of an adage, though it appears not to be one. For the pattern cf such adages as *Adagia* I i 33, 34, and 35 *Manus manum fricat* 'One hand rubs another,' *Gratia gratiam parit* 'One favour begets another,' and *Par pari referre* 'To render like for like.' Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 572B also notes the questioners' move 'from one thing to another.'

45 For John as the dividing line between the Law and the gospel, see eg Matt 11:7–15 with its paraphrase CWE 45 183–6 and Luke 7:24–30 with its paraphrase, 217–21.

46 The text of 5:33 has the Pharisees ask why Jesus' disciples do not practice fasting as they and John's disciples do. In Matt 9:14 John's disciples ask the same question. In Mark 2:18 it appears in Greek that both sets ask the question. The variation among the evangelists is noted by Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 30 (31) PG 57 336, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 390C–D, the *Gloss* (on 5:33) citing Bede, and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:33) 161v; all agree that probably both groups raised the question. Here the paraphrase accommodates the inclusion of John's disciples among the questioners and later specifically omits the scribes at the end of the paragraph.

be lesser than John, treated his followers more tenderly and gently, at least in matters that concern outward observances, such as fasts and prayers. For by these things in particular the Pharisees got themselves a reputation for piety among the people. But though Christ himself prayed frequently, he taught his followers that praying should be done in few words and in private; and he did not require any fasts, even shutting his eyes to some things wherein the dictates of the Law seemed to be disregarded, while he shaped his followers by other means for more powerful measures which are particular to the power of the gospel.[47] Indeed, it is far more powerful to pardon a wrong from the heart, to behave generously even to those who have behaved badly, to lose one's life for the salvation of one's neighbour than to endure a fast until evening[48] or rattle off a set of psalms.[49] The Pharisees made much of what was visible and what could be carried out even hypocritically, disregarding those things that concern true and perfect virtue. But

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47 Jesus' comments on the Pharisees' display of righteous behaviour and his instructions for brief and private prayer are most fully found in Matt 6:5–13. For examples of Jesus' shutting his eyes to requirements of the Law, in addition to healing on the sabbath, see 6:1–5 with its paraphrase, and the parallels in Matt 12:1–8 and Mark 2:23–8.
This sentence drew the disapproval of Noël Béda. In the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 492F Erasmus defended his statement that Christ required no fasts of his followers, saying that he, Erasmus, approves of Christian fasting in many places, but that here Christ is defending his followers against the abusive language of those who did fast. In *Supputatio* LB IX 611E–613A he points out that the remark about praying is absolutely biblical, so why claim that he ought to have reconciled it with such instructions to pray without ceasing as 18:1 or 1 Thess 5:17? He refers Béda to his *Modus orandi Deum* (*Praying to God*) CWE 70. As for fasting, Erasmus says, the Baptist fasted and Jews fasted – but Jesus did not prescribe fasting for his disciples.

48 'Endure ... evening' is *inediam perferre usque ad vesperam* in *1535* and LB; *inediam proferre usque ad vesperam* in *1524*, *1524*, *1534*, not 'endure' but 'draw out, prolong ... evening.' The end of natural light was acknowledged broadly in the OT as the end of one day and the beginning of the next, as in eg the regulations for the celebration of Passover (Deut 16:6 and 24:13–15) and other occasions (Exod 22:26 and 23:11, Lev 22:7). Fasts until sunset can be found at Judg 20:26, 1 Sam 31:13, and 2 Sam 1:12 and 3:35. The same time frame carried over into Christian practice.

49 Psalm singing figured in the earliest Christian worship: eg Eph 5:19, Col 3:16, and perhaps James 5:13. Recital or singing of psalms was also a regular part of monastic prayer. The Rule of St Benedict chapters 8–18, for instance, prescribed that the whole Psalter be sung in the course of a week, divided among the elements of the Divine Office: *RB 1980 in Latin and English with Notes* ed Timothy Fry OSB (Collegeville, MN 1981).

these Pharisees, more shameless than the scribes, dared to confront the Lord himself, saying, 'Why is it[50] that the disciples of John fast often and pray at great length, but yours eat and drink what they like and also are not observed to be often in prayer? If you steadfastly approve of John's holiness, why do you differ from his practice?'

To this false charge, since it was properly directed at himself, the Lord replied courteously and calmly,[51] saying, 'I am not condemning fasts and prayers, but in these matters I give my disciples some leeway for the time being, so that I may advance them gradually to more powerful things by other means. In matters that concern the body and have to do with the ceremonies of the Law, our practice is easier; but in matters of the heart they are far stricter. The things that you admire as the height of holiness my disciples will do of their own accord whenever the occasion requires. For now do not begrudge my disciples this freedom. The outcome of events will show whose practice was more effective. John boasted that he was the bridegroom's friend, not the bridegroom.[52] Besides, it is not suitable for those who are in the groom's party and with him in the bridal chamber,[53] where everything is rightly joyous, to be compelled to fast. They are still soft-hearted and completely reliant on the bridegroom. They will not have his company for long.

'But the time will come when they are bereft of the bridegroom; then, having grown stronger, they will voluntarily and of their own accord not only fast but even go to prison and to death, whenever love requires.[54] Fasting as

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50 'Why is it' is *quid est causae*. The Vulgate of Erasmus' day and later read the words of the Pharisees in 5:33 as beginning with an interrogative *quare* 'why,' translating a Greek textual tradition that had διὰ τί 'why.' Modern texts have abandoned that reading and make the words a statement.

51 Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 30 (31) PG 57 366 notes that Jesus' reply is made 'with all moderation' and is milder in tone than answers he gives to his interlocutors on other occasions.

52 John's boast of being the friend of the bridegroom refers to John 3:29, paraphrased at CWE 46 51–2.

53 'Those who are . . . chamber.' Here Erasmus avoids the expression in 5:34 *filios sponsi* 'sons of the bridegroom' in the Vulgate (not the Neo-Vulgate), υἱοὺς τοῦ νυμφῶνος in some Greek traditions and 'children of the bridechamber' in AV. In an annotation *non potestis filios sponsi* (on 5:34) he explained that *sponsi* is not the correct translation of νυμφῶνος, which means *thalami* 'bridal chamber' and refers his reader to earlier annotations on Matt 9:15 and Mark 2:19. See Fitzmyer AB Luke 598 for the Hebraism involved in calling the groom's attendants 'sons.'

54 For biblical instances of disciples in the postresurrection period going to prison and to death, see eg Acts 5, 12, 16:19–34, Paul's words at 2 Cor 11:23–9, the account of the martyrdom of Stephen, Acts 7–8, and reference to the death of

such is neither good nor bad. So those who fast just to fast do nothing great; but those who can despise the glory of this world according to my teaching, disregard pleasures, scorn wealth, count all passions as nothing, rein in their anger and envy, be well-wishers to those who wish them evil, speak blessings to those who curse them, pray for those who persecute them, and finally hold life cheap in comparison to a brother's salvation – these I will recognize as disciples worthy of me. The presence of my flesh makes them weak for now; but when the availability of this body is taken from them, after they have drunk deeply of the gospel spirit, then they will be strong and invincible in spiritual gifts. Those who set praise for righteousness in corporal observances, since they put trust in their works, will be found weak in enduring the things I prepare for my own. But as for those who mistrust their own deeds and place all their resources in the gifts of the heart that they will receive from me and reflect back to me, no adversity breaks them. John's practice is different from mine because his goal is different. The two cannot be combined. Anyone who wants to be my disciple must be entirely spiritual, placing no confidence in material things, in which all the Pharisees' righteousness is located. Therefore I teach my disciples nothing of those things of yours that have anything in common with carnal observance of the Law, lest, if I allow even a little of it, they slip completely back to that from which I want them to be entirely separated.'

Furthermore, so that our Lord Jesus could show how great a difference there was between John, who instructed his followers according to the familiar taste[55] of the Old Law, and himself, who formed his followers by a far different method to more perfect things, he put forward a comparison of this kind: 'No one is so foolish that if he wants to mend a tear in an old garment, he applies a new patch cut from a new garment.[56] If he does so, there is a dou-

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James, Acts 12:2. The reader might also think of the flood of martyrs' stories in the centuries thereafter.

55 'Familiar taste' is *haustam salivam*, more literally 'the taste they have drunk.' Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 392A–B also uses *saliva* in this connection, speaking of the Jews as 'dipped in the flavour [*saliva*] of their old life.'

56 'Patch' is *pannus* for the Vulgate's *commissura*. In an annotation on the parallel passage at Matt 9:16, Erasmus cites Horace, who uses *pannus* to mean 'patch' in his *Ars poetica*, *Epistles* 2.3.16, where the poet derides a serious literary effort blemished by the 'purple patch' incongruously stitched in by its ambitious author. Augustine uses Horace's exact phrase *pannus assuitur* 'a patch is sewn on' in his discussion of 5:37–8, *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.18, and *pannus* is used by Hugh of St Cher (on 5:36–8) 162v. For a different use of this word see chapter 2 nn11 and 17.

ble disadvantage. For first he damages the new garment to mend the old one; and then the new patch added to the old garment, since it doesn't match, betrays the clumsiness of the mend. Again, no one is so foolish that he stores new wine in old wineskins; or else the force of the fermenting new wine will split the old skins, and the result will be a double loss: for the skins will be ruined and the wine will gush out.[57] So what is to be done? Things that do not match each other should not be combined. An old garment should be mended with an old patch, and an old patch should not be applied to a new garment. New wine should be stored in new wineskins; in this way both the wineskins and the wine will be preserved.

'I know how hard it is to make this new spiritual teaching attractive to those who have by now been long accustomed to the old teaching. For scarcely anything different from what a person has been long accustomed to is pleasing to him. For at the outset he is offended at the taste of something unfamiliar. In the same way one who has drunk old wine for a long time is not instantly delighted by young wine. He is looking for the taste he is accustomed to, and he says the old wine was better, though only because he is accustomed to it. Thus those who have grown old in Judaism[58] recoil at the taste of spiritual teaching and look for those more material things to which they have become accustomed: circumcision, holy days, sabbath observances, dietary restrictions, garments, fasts, Jerusalem, the temple, sacrificial offerings, ritual washing, the Pharisees' petty regulations, and other things of this kind. And they not only look for such things, they even prefer them to things that are far more effective, such as a heart circumcised of base desires; a heart forever on holiday from profane pursuits; a heart at peace from every tumult of evil passions; a heart that shuns contact with everything that might stain mental purity; a heart wreathed in faith, love, humility, purity; a heart that always refrains from all evil doing; a heart that always yearns towards its heavenly native land; a heart that is a temple and guest house for the Holy Spirit; a heart always offering itself as a pure and pleasing sacrifice to God; a heart free from every stain through faith in the gospel; a heart

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57 The text of 5:37 ends 'and it will be spilled and the skins will be destroyed'; cf also Matt 9:17 and Mark 2:22. Erasmus reverses the order to one ending with the gushing wine, arguably a more picturesque arrangement.

58 'Have grown old in Judaism' is *consenuerunt in Judaismo* in *1523*, *1524*, and *1534* but *consueverunt in Judaismo* 'have grown accustomed in Judaism' in *1535* and LB (LB with a note that 'another edition' reads *consenuerunt*). The modifier *in Judaismo* favours the reading *consenuerunt*; that sort of prepositional phrase does not typically appear with forms of *consuesco*, *consuevi*. The clear reference to aging also appears to fit the context of old wine and old bottles.

detached from everything of this world and dedicating itself completely to the things of God; a heart fully observant of the things that gospel teaching commands and requires.[59] For it requires faith, and it commands love. This indeed is my new wine, which wineskins accustomed to the flat wine of Moses will not bear; it requires new and pure wineskins, strong and solid in spiritual gifts.'[60]

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59 Parallelisms or models for most or all of these descriptions can be found in both OT and NT. Cf for the circumcision of the heart (*animus*, not *cor*, throughout this passage), Jer 4:4 and 9:25, Rom 2:29, Phil 3:3; for the heart that yearns for its heavenly home, Ps 39:13, Heb 11:13–16 and 13:14, 1 Pet 2:11; for the heart as a sacrifice, Ps 51:17; for the believer as a temple of the Lord, 1 Cor 3:16 and 6:19, 2 Cor 6:16.

60 In the paraphrase on 5:34–9 Erasmus keeps the figure of John the Baptist in the foreground as the representative, as well as the end, of the Old Law; see nn45 and 46 above. The exegetical tradition emphasized instead the Old Law and / or the scribes and Pharisees, symbolized in old wineskins and old garments: Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 30 (31) PG 57 367, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 59B–C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 391C–392A, the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 5:36–9), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 765D–768D, Hugh of St Cher (on 5:36–8) 162r–v, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 5:36–9). These also agree that the disciples themselves can be regarded as old wineskins and old garments, who need gradual instruction in the elements of the new teaching until they are renewed and strengthened by the passion and ascension of the Lord and its immediate aftermath, described in Acts 1–2.

Another thread in the exposition of Jesus' words here concerns the fasting expected of mature Christians, especially of clerics and religious. The Latin exegetes just listed tend to follow Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.18, who explains that there is fasting in tribulation, to propitiate God for one's sins; and fasting in joy, when carnal things are less pleasing and there is greater feasting on spiritual goods; see Jerome and Bede cited above, followed by the *Gloss* (on 5:35) and Hugh of St Cher (on 5:34–6) 162r. Erasmus appears to acknowledge the two general classes in describing abstinence from moral flaws and temptations twice ('despise the glory . . . a brother's salvation' 184 and again 'a heart circumcised . . . stain mental purity' just above), along with the disciplined practice of spiritual virtues and joys ('a heart wreathed . . . gospel teaching commands and requires'). Yet, with the exception of his dismissive remark above at 'Indeed, it is far more powerful' 182, he makes no mention of corporal disciplines of fasting and abstinence. For his discontent with traditional church rules on the subject of fasting, a discontent already made public by the time this *Paraphrase* was printed, see eg *De esu carnium* (*On Eating Meat*; 1522) CWE 73; and the colloquies *Convivium profanum* 'The Profane Feast' (1518) CWE 39 132–63, especially 143–6 and *Convivium religiosum* 'The Godly Feast' (1522) CWE 39 171–243, especially 187–91.

Chapter 6

And look, just at that time an opportunity came along to explain what the new wine was and what the old wineskins were. Scrupulosity about the sabbath was old wine; but love ready to help a neighbour at every opportunity is new wine. So it happened that on a particular sabbath (which the Jews call *deuteroproton*, that is, second-first, because falling between two sabbaths it seems to have a double holiness, since it is the end of the preceding sabbath and the beginning of the following one),[1] Jesus was making his way through standing grain. Because by chance his disciples happened to be hungry, they broke off some ears, rubbed them in their hands, and ate the grains. This was a common way of relieving urgent hunger.[2] On this occasion, indeed, when gospel love would have voluntarily provided food for the hungry, the Pharisees, old wineskins, looked for the flat wine of their ancient superstition, saying, 'Why are you men doing what it is sacrilege to do on the sabbath?'[3]

Here the Lord, again defending his followers,[4] replied, 'You who profess knowledge of the Law, have you not at least read what David did in a

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1 In ancient and medieval texts of Luke, and continuing to modern times but now widely rejected, the sabbath of 6:1 was called the 'second-first' *secundoprimum* or δευτερόπρωτον. See the discussion in Fitzmyer AB Luke 607–8. Erasmus surveyed the difficulties of the word and the views of his predecessors in an annotation *in sabbato secundoprimo* (on 6:1), rather long already in *1516* and added to thereafter. He cites the discussions of Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1729D–1730A, followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 392B–393A, Hugh of St Cher (on 6:1) 162v, and others as all being unsatisfactory. He does show some respect for the attempt of Theophylact (which he quotes) *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 786C–D and his predecessor Chrysostom (added in *1519*) *Hom in Matthaeum* 39 (40) PG 57 433 to explain the word as referring to the conjunction of the weekly sabbath with a movable holy day (ie also a sabbath) either preceding or following. Erasmus' explanation in the *Paraphrase* is not as logical as what he read in Theophylact and Chrysostom. In *1519* he added to the annotation that recently a monk and professor of theology, on being asked by a fellow dinner guest what *secundoprimum* in Luke meant, replied, 'I'm giving up my hood if Luke ever wrote any such thing.' The professor spoke out of deplorable ignorance, but perhaps more truly than he could have known.

2 See Deut 23:25.

3 Erasmus picks up Luke's parable of old skins and new wine from 5:37–8; see the end of the paraphrase on chapter 5. He will allude to it throughout chapter 6.

4 As he had at 5:31 and 34; see 180 and 183 with the associated notes. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 393C–D says that while Luke has the Pharisees confront the

similar situation, when he himself was hungry along with his companions, just as you see that mine are hungry now? Not only was he on the point of starvation and about to venture on doing what my companions are doing now, but though he was ritually unclean, he entered God's temple and did not hesitate to eat the holy bread, which they call the bread of the Presence, and which it was right for the priests alone to eat. And not only did he himself dare to eat it, but he fed his companions on the same bread and was not disturbed either by reverence for the temple or by the prohibition of the Law that forbade anyone except the priests to touch the bread, and that only while they were busy in the temple performing the sacred rites. Not even the priest hesitated to hand over the holy bread, understanding as he did that such observances were not established to destroy people but to save them, and that therefore they cease whenever some greater cause is pressing.'[5]

And when our Lord Jesus had said a good deal on the matter, he ended his remarks with this observation: 'You may be sure of this, that the Son of Man, who is Lord of all, is Lord of the sabbath. And he who came to bring salvation to all will not be hindered from his duty by scrupulosity about the sabbath.'

Another example came along too of how old skins do not endure the new wine of gospel freedom. For it happened that on yet another sabbath, according to his usual practice, he went into a synagogue and was teaching. The Pharisees put up with this, since it was in line with the custom and commandment of the Law.[6] But present there in the crowd was a poor fellow carrying his hand around, the one with which he normally worked to feed himself and his children, so withered and maimed that it would be better not to have a hand than to be burdened by a useless one.[7] And now the scribes

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disciples, Matthew (12:2) and Mark (2:24) had them confronting Jesus directly. Bede adds that since Jesus' role is to defend his own, according to Isa 11:4, Luke's variant is appropriate.

5 Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 2 PL 26 79A–B, followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 393D, notes that the priest recognized that hunger outweighs the requirements of the Law, citing Hos 6:6.

6 Cf the paraphrase on Jesus' behaviour in the synagogue at Nazareth in 4:16–17, 141–2 and the notes there. Here Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 394C remarks on Jesus' custom of preaching in the synagogues because that was where numbers of people gathered on the sabbath to read and hear Scripture, and quotes the reference to the antiquity of this custom at Acts 15:21. Hugh of St Cher (on 6:6) 163v also mentions the attendance at synagogue offering a good opportunity for Jesus' preaching.

7 Erasmus' Luke-voice knows more about the family difficulties of the man with the withered hand than the evangelist does. This development of the pity ploy,

and Pharisees, who should have pitied the man and accosted Jesus on his behalf for healing, silently watched him to see whether he would restore the man's hand. For they knew that the Lord's mercy was everywhere quick to aid everyone. They were grasping at a handle[8] for charging him with violating the sabbath if on the day on which the Law had forbidden work he restored the hand of an unfortunate person.

But Jesus, fully aware of what the scribes and Pharisees were scheming among themselves, addressed the man with the maimed hand and, so that he would be visible to everyone, told him to stand up and come forward into the middle of the people. And so that you may readily understand that he deserved Jesus' kindness, the man obediently stood up and came to stand in the sight of everyone, providing a clear view of his misfortune.[9] At this Jesus turned to the scribes and Pharisees; he did not betray their malicious thoughts to the people but in questioning them pricked their consciences, saying, 'I would be glad to learn from you who profess knowledge of the Law whether it is permitted to assist one's neighbour on the sabbath, or rather to abandon a neighbour in his misfortune when you can help him? And whether it is right to save the life of a man on the sabbath or to destroy it? For one who does not save the life of another though he is able to do so destroys it.'[10]

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a stratagem known to ancient teachers of rhetoric, may be influenced by Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* 2 PL 26 80C–D, who reports that the Gospel of 'Matthew used by Nazarenes and Ebionites' describes the man calling for aid, saying, 'I was a mason, earning a living with my hands; restore me to health, Jesus, so I don't need to beg my food.' In paraphrasing the episode in Matthew, Erasmus had not exploited this information; see the paraphrase on Matt 12:10 CWE 45 194. But he would use it again in the paraphrase on Mark 3:1–3 CWE 49 48.

8 'Were grasping at a handle' (*captabant ansam*). Cf *Adagia* I iv 4 *Ansam quaerere* 'To look for a handle.'

9 'You may ... understand' is *intelligas*. The second-person singular here may refer to an indefinite 'you,' like the English 'you' for 'one' (eg 'As you go up the hill, you see') or to Theophilus the addressee of this Gospel, though he is usually adddressed by name, as in the second paragraph of chapter 5 163 above.
Erasmus adds 'obediently' to the description of the afflicted man's coming forward, underlining his worthiness based on faith; see the equation of faith and obedience in the paraphrase on 5:3–5, 164–5.
Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 40 (41) PG 57 439 and Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 577B–C say that Jesus calls the man to come forward to give the congregation a chance to feel pity.

10 'Save the life' is *animam salvam facere* in 6:10 and in Mark 3:4 (the question is not included in Matt 12:11). Here Erasmus does not say *anima* 'life's breath, soul,' translating ψυχή 'soul' but twice uses *vita* 'life,' which like its Greek equivalent

And when the Lord had turned his eyes everywhere and there was no one to answer him, he said to the man, 'Hold out your hand.' The man promptly held out his hand, which just now was maimed, drawn up, and without movement. So great was the power of the one bidding him. What did the scribes and Pharisees do now? The miracle was too plain to be denied. Common sense held it a godly thing to come to the aid of the well-being of living creatures at any time. But those accustomed to the stale wine of Mosaic law do not tolerate the new wine of gospel love. Though from these acts they ought to have recognized divine power and the author of the Law, they turned to raving madness.[11] Now they began a murderous plan among themselves, how to destroy Jesus. Such a thing was permissible for those princes of religion on the sabbath, though true religion was to grant health to a wretched person on the sabbath.

Again our Lord Jesus left the cities and the throngs of people and withdrew to a mountain to pray, and he passed that night in praying to God, teaching us that if we want to begin anything that we desire to turn out well, we should begin with prayer that God may breathe favourably and propitiously on our undertakings.[12] But when dawn came he summoned his dis-

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βίος can also mean 'livelihood, means of making a living.' See the paraphrase on verse 6 with n7. Why the biblical text uses *anima* rather than *vita* here was discussed by Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.7, who suggests that Jesus' miracles of healing are all intended to engender faith in the salvation of the soul, or that the right hand in its crippled state signifies the cessation of good works that cripples the soul, or even that *anima* is an idiomatic use for *homo* 'person.' He is followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 394D–395C, who cites Exod 1:5. The interlinear *Gloss* (on 6:9) takes the Gospel expression simply to mean 'cure the person'; the marginal *Gloss* (on 6:9) quotes Bede but gives preference to the meaning 'save the soul.' Hugh of St Cher (on 6:9) 164r summarizes Bede, preferring the meaning 'cure the person' and citing Deut 10:22.

11 *amentia* 'raving madness' replaces the Gospel's *insipientia* 'senselessness.' In a brief annotation *repleti sunt insipientia* (on 6:11) Erasmus had noted that the word *insipientia* translates ἄνοια 'that is, dementia' (*dementia*). Even in classical times *insipientia* could be equated with madness; see Cicero *Tusculan Disputations* 3.10 and 68. The medieval tradition explains *insipientia* variously as *invidia* 'resentment, envy': the interlinear *Gloss* (on 6:11) and Hugh of St Cher (on 6:11) 164r; *livor* 'envy, malice, spite': the marginal *Gloss* (on 6:11); and *irrationabilis iracundia* 'irrational rage': Nicholas of Lyra (on 6:11). All these also make explicit the salvific role of Jesus in contrast to the reactions of his opponents, identified as scribes and Pharisees already in 6:7.

12 That Jesus here models how we should begin any new undertaking is stated by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1732C–1733A, urging solitary prayer; he is quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 396A and the *Catena aurea* (on 6:12). Hugh

ciples, whom he now had as constant companions and witnesses of whatever he did.[13] From them he chose several chief ones, whom he called apostles because he was going to send them as ambassadors of the gospel into the whole world, to do nothing other than what they had in their instructions.[14] These are their names: Simon, to whom was later given the name Cephas in Syriac, Peter in Greek, 'the rock' in Latin,[15] obviously because of his firm proclamation when, at a time when people were wavering, he as spokesman of all the apostles declared that Jesus was the Son of the living God; his partner was Andrew, his brother. Then James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpheus and Simon whose nickname was the Zealot; Judas the brother of James and Judas Iscariot,[16] who betrayed

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of St Cher (on 6:12) 164r and Nicholas of Lyra (on 6:12 and 6:12 *moraliter*) take this model to refer specifically to the election of bishops, a point Erasmus takes up in the paraphrase on verse 17, 192.

'Breathe favourably and propitiously on our undertakings' (*nostris coeptis dexter ac favens adspiret*). The ancient commentator Servius in a note on Virgil *Aeneid* 2.388 remarks that one of the meanings of *dexter* 'right' (opposite to *sinister* 'left') is *favens*, ie *propitius* 'propitious,' and the two adjectives are found in close connection in the invocation of the poem *Aetna*, lines 4 and 6, ascribed to Virgil. Erasmus' expression here also recalls Quintilian's invocation, very soberly meant, in the prologue to book 4 of his *Institutio oratoria* (4.pr.5). The Roman professor of rhetoric, facing the increasing complexity and gravity of his material, prays to Mercury that he 'breathe on' (*adspiret*) his suppliant and 'favourably and willingly be present' (*dexter ac volens adsit*).

13 For the role of witnesses to Jesus' ministry, cf the paraphrase on 1:1–2, 18–20.

14 Erasmus here explicates the meaning of the Greek term 'apostle,' ἀπόστολος 'one who is sent; messenger, ambassador, envoy.' Cf chapter 4 162 with n100. The definition 'sent' appears in Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 396C, the *Gloss* (on 6:13), and Hugh of St Cher (on 6:13) 164r. Erasmus omits the 'twelve' found in 6:13, though there are twelve names in the following list.

15 The added name 'Peter' had already appeared in this Gospel in 5:8 and several times in the paraphrase on 5:1–10, but without definition. Cf Matt 16:16–18 and John 1:42. The explanation that 'Cephas' is Syriac is in Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 142, in his list for the Gospel of John. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 397A–D has a very long discussion of 'Simon,' 'Peter,' and 'Cephas,' summarized in the *Catena aurea* (on 6:14). Erasmus adds that the Latin for Peter / Cephas is *saxum* 'the rock.'

16 For the synoptic lists of disciples and the relationships indicated by names in possessive form, see CWE 50 9 n71 and 44 125 n1. In the annotation *Iacobum Alphaei* (on 6:15) Erasmus had noted that when Greek adds to a personal name A another name B in possessive form, the meaning is that A is 'son of' B, which the Latin translator should have added. Cf chapter 3 121 with n60. Thus here *Iudas Iacobi* would mean 'Judas son of James,' and so Erasmus translated it in

Jesus – whom he chose not out of thoughtlessness but by foreknowledge, to teach all by the example of Judas how dreadful it is to misuse the Saviour's gentleness towards us.[17] And not in the whole band of apostles was there a powerful or rich or learned person, or a Pharisee, scribe, or priest. He chose all simple folk, to pour new wine into new wineskins.[18]

Once these had been chosen in this way, he came down from the mountain till he reached a flat area big enough for a crowd. Surely things that require utterly complete purity must be carried out on a mountain. Among them the first place belongs to prayer, and the next to the selection of those to whom stewardship of the gospel word is to be entrusted.[19] Besides, the rest of his throng of disciples was there too, and a large crowd of all sorts of people as well, who had gathered at the spot from the whole of Judea, even from Jerusalem itself and also from the coastal cities of Tyre and Sidon.[20] Eagerness to hear the gospel word had drawn many even from far away, and hope of healing had drawn some. For he freed all people from every kind of disease by which they were held fast. Even those harassed by unclean spirits were healed. And all these things were carried out with such ease that he instantly restored some to health by just a word, others by the

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1523 and *1524*. But the same interpretation in his NT provoked a dispute with Ambrosius Pelargus in June 1529, recorded in Epp 2181–6. Erasmus changed the wording from 'son' to 'brother' in *1534* and *1535*.

17 Jesus' providence in selecting his future betrayer as one of the disciples is pointed out by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1733B, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 399D and the *Catena aurea* (on 6:16).

18 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1733A–B had begun his discussion of Jesus' apostles with a comment on their social characteristics: not wise, not rich, not upperclass, but fishermen and tax collectors, lest he appear to draw people to his grace by any other means than the truth. Ambrose is quoted by the *Gloss* (on 6:13).

19 See n12.

20 'From the coastal cities of Tyre and Sidon' is *a civitatibus maritimis Tyro et Sidone*. The Gospel text in Erasmus' day read *et maritima et Tyri et Sidonis* 'and from the coastal areas of both Tyre and Sidon.' In an annotation, later two annotations, *et maritima et Tyri* and *et Sidonis* (on 6:17) Erasmus discussed the ambiguities of the Latin expression and of one of his Greek manuscripts, leaving open the question whether the parts of Tyre and Sidon closest to the water were meant or Tyre and Sidon themselves, both port cities representing the coastal part of Judea; he follows the latter option here and also in his 1527 NT. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 400B points out that the sea meant here is not the nearby Sea of Galilee but the 'great sea,' ie the Mediterranean, on whose coast Tyre and Sidon were to be found; he is followed by the *Gloss* (on 6:17) and Hugh of St Cher (on 6:17) 165r.

touch of his garment. Indeed, in him was the source and fullness of divine power, which proceeded from him just as light proceeds from the sun, as heat from fire, and it brought healing to all. For he was the Saviour and had come to heal everyone.[21]

Then he began to present the new wine of gospel teaching, for which he had chosen certain steadier persons as new wineskins:[22] 'Blessed are you,' he said, 'who do not possess a proud spirit and are not smugly satisfied with yourselves,[23] for though in the world's eyes you are despised and contemptible, yours is the kingdom of God, far grander than every worldly kingdom. You see diseases dispelled, demons put to flight, sins wiped out. What does this world's loftiness have to compare with such sublimity? Is it not a grand kingdom to be a slave to no vice, to be in bondage to no lusts, to have trampled Satan and all his troops, to have overcome the world with all its terrors and enticements, to be received in the fellowship of God, to be enrolled in the kingdom of heaven?[24]

'Blessed are you who, having little, are hungry and thirsty, and who, being content with getting by, spurn the riches and extravagance of this world. But you hunger for the heart's food, which is the divine word, you thirst for

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21 Erasmus elevates the paraphrase on verses 18–19 to a sort of doxology, invoking the biblical themes of bodily healing and of divine power imaged as light, both pointing to spiritual salvation and forecasting themes he will develop in the paraphrase that follows.

22 'Had chosen certain steadier persons' accommodates without emphasizing the statement in 6:20 that Jesus 'lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said' – Erasmus makes no mention of lifting up his eyes – whereas in Matt 5:2 Jesus addresses 'them,' which could be taken as either the disciples or the apostles or both and could even include the assembled crowd. At mid-194 he is made to refer to the hearers specifically as preachers. Parts of the exegetical tradition pointed out that while Jesus' words were addressed to the disciples especially, much that he said here would be of use to the general crowd as well: Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 15 PG 57 223 (discussing Luke), Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 401A–B, the *Gloss* (on 6:20), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 6:20).

23 'Who do not possess a proud spirit' (*qui nihil habetis elati spiritus*). Erasmus drops the idea of poverty here (it returns in the next beatitude) but adds the reference to one kind of human spirit. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 401B says that the 'poor' here are 'those who count as nothing every achievement of this present age no matter how high it seems,' and who prove to be stripped of desire for human pleasure.

24 This sentence appears to allude to the standard ancient renunciations of Satan and all his works (or minions) and of the pomp and glory of the world in the baptismal ritual, and to the priest's following announcement that the newly baptized is received into the fellowship of God or Christ.

the living water of the gospel spirit,[25] since it shall be your lot to be filled with the salvific delights that you long for. Blessed are you who have voluntarily deprived yourselves of the pleasures of this world in pursuit of gospel godliness, preferring things that lead through temporary sufferings to the joys of eternal life, because the time shall come when, the world turned upside down, your grief will be turned into joy and your mourning into laughter. Common folk call "happy" those whom people applaud, who are advanced to high office, who are honoured with grand titles. But you shall be blessed, I guarantee, when people mock you, when they force you out of their company as being cursed, when they heap up many reproaches against you for my sake, when they strive to wipe out your name and memory entirely or to make it abominable to future ages, and that for no fault of yours but out of hatred for the Son of Man, whose teaching and glory you will preach.

'Do not be dissatisfied with yourselves in any way because of these things; rather, rejoice when they happen to you and be glad. For if the approval of wicked men does not match your deserts, an abundant recompense for your good deeds still awaits you in heaven. Mortals will not be able to wipe out your names, which are recorded in heaven; they will not be able to dim your glory with their insults, for your glory shall always be joined with mine. Indeed, the more they attack your name and fame, the more they will make it shine. For it is highest praise to have displeased godless people. This is no new pattern. Outstanding virtue has always been hateful to the wicked. What people of this age will do to you, their ancestors did likewise to the holy prophets, for no other reason except that in accordance with God's will the prophets did not let the truth, which is always hateful to evildoers, go unspoken. Console yourselves with their example.[26] The memory of those whose names your ancestors tried to wipe out is now venerated among all people. But you, relying on your own innocence, must not think of vengeance. For what those people will do to you shall not go unpunished, though for the present they may seem fortunate and flourishing in the good things of this world. For they are being held over for eternal punishment.[27]

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25 For spiritual bread and water, cf John 4:14 and 6:33–5.

26 Cf Acts 7:52. That ancient prophets were persecuted for telling the truth, as truth tellers always are, is pointed out by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 403A, followed by the *Gloss* (on 6:23) and Nicholas of Lyra (on 6:23).

27 In this rendering of Luke's four beatitudes Erasmus has declined to engage openly with a traditional discussion of how Luke's version compares with Matthew's eight beatitudes; still, his rewritings are not inconsistent with the four-virtues approach seen in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1734C–1739C, who argued that all of Matthew's beatitudes can be subsumed under the headings of the four cardinal virtues: temperance, meaning self-restraint; justice,

'On the other hand, woe to you rich people, who for the present are self-satisfied, delighting your hearts with wealth, high office, and the enticements of this world, and who do not reflect that in a short time that empty happiness of yours will be taken from you and everlasting unhappiness will take its place. Woe to you who now laugh, captivated by a succession of transient things and drunk on sweet fortune, because soon the situation will be reversed and you shall weep and wail, and your momentary pleasure shall be changed into everlasting torment.[28]

'Do not be self-satisfied when people congratulate you for your false appearance of blessedness and applaud you. For they are ignorant of real bliss, since they exalt your base and ungodly actions, calling your godless persecution of the gospel "zeal for the Law"; and your harassment and murder of good people they call "devotion to God." That utterly false praise will not spare you from God's vengeance but will make you deserving of even heavier punishment, not only for not being ashamed of your evil deeds but also for having sought praise for committing them.[29] In the same way the ancestors of those who will praise you for godless deeds once applauded the false prophets who rebelled against the prophets of the Lord and stirred up princes and people to kill them. The prophets of the Lord did not seek vengeance against their persecutors, yet neither did the godly go without their

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comprising righteousness and mercy; prudence, or looking forward to the kingdom of God; and courage in the face of oppression. Ambrose also said that Luke's four can be paired up with these, in the order listed. Versions of this treatment appear in Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 403A–B, the *Gloss* (on 6:20), Hugh of St Cher (on 6:20) 165V, and the *Catena aurea* (on 6:20) quoting Ambrose.

28 Reference to the misguided being 'drunk' on their good fortune, and similar allusions to God's 'cup of wrath' that the ungodly drink willingly only to find it contains their destruction, is frequent in biblical language. Some examples are Ps 75:8, Isa 51:17 and 22, Jer 25:15, Rev 14:8–10, 17:2, and 18:3.
Erasmus does not actually paraphrase the second 'woe' in Luke's series, verse 25a: 'Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger.' The description of the future of the ones who now laugh, however, seems to allude to the account of Dives the rich man and Lazarus in this Gospel at 16:19–31, a parable explicitly alluded to in the discussion of 6:24–5 by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 593A–C and Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 403D–404A, who is followed by the *Gloss* (on 6:25) and Hugh of St Cher (on 6:24) 166V.

29 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 404B comments that the Psalmist deplores this, quoting, 'For the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul: and the unjust man is blessed' (Ps 9:24 in the Vulgate Gallican / LXX version). For, Bede says, 'Not the least part of his punishment is that his crimes are not only not rebuked but are even praised as deeds well done.' He is followed by the *Gloss* (on 6:26) and Nicholas of Lyra (on 6:26).

due reward nor the wicked without their due punishment.[30] Those who now do not bother to heed one who warns them will be sorry for their crimes too late. As for those who return evil deeds for kindness, they may see for themselves what they deserve.

'But to you who give ear to my words I deliver this new commandment, like new wine, of gospel freshness.[31] Not only are you not to repay evil with evil, but you are instead to love your enemies and do good to those who do you wrong. Repay insults and verbal abuse with words of friendship and healing. Pray for those who slander you, that by your prayers those who falsely accuse you before mortals may have their real crimes pardoned and may be reunited to God. May you be so far from wanting to retaliate for a wrong you have suffered that if anyone strikes you on the cheek once, you offer the other cheek to his blow sooner than seeking vengeance. And if anyone tries to take your cloak from you, let him take your shirt too, rather than getting into an argument with him over the injustice. In the end he who has done the injury is really the one who suffers injury; on the other hand, one who, at the cost of some object, is mindful of peace and tranquillity has gained, not lost. Let your effort be to do good to everyone and harm to none. If anyone harms you, you have God as your avenger.[32] If you have

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30 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 404C–D quotes Ezek 13:3–4, noting that in Luke *false* prophets are clearly meant and that the Vulgate text uses the word *prophetae*, as does the Ezekiel passage. Hugh of St Cher (on 6:26) 167r has a lemma *prophetis*, which he explains means *pseudoprophetis*. Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 6:26) argued against accepting *prophetis* on the grounds that some scribe had altered the text here to match the mention of prophets in verse 23. In a *1516* annotation *secundum haec enim faciebant prophetis patres eorum* (on 6:26) Erasmus defended the reading *prophetis* for the *pseudoprophetis* found in some Greek and Latin texts and exegetes. He said in the *1519* annotation that the interpretation of which prophets were meant depended more on the context than the particular noun. He changed his NT text to *pseudoprophetis*, just before Edward Lee took him to task for *prophetis*; see *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* Note 49 CWE 72 158. Here in the paraphrase he contrasts the true prophets of verse 23 and the false prophets of the traditional text, thus accommodating either reading.

31 'Give ear' is *praebetis aurem*. While the text of the Vulgate Bible has an ample supply of phrases like *auribus percipere* 'receive with your ear' (eg Judg 5:2; Pss 5:1, 48:1, and 53:4) and *aurem inclinare* 'incline your ear' (eg Pss 30:3, 70:2, and 77:1), *praebere aurem* is found only in Job 6:28 and Wisd of Sol 6:3. It does occur in classical Latin: eg Livy 38.52.11, Horace *Satires* 1.1.22, Ovid *Metamorphoses* 3.692 and various other works, Seneca the Elder *Controversiae* 7.1.4, Seneca the Younger *Dialogi* 6.53, and Quintilian *Institutio oratoria* 11.3.44.

32 That God reserves to himself vengeance for wrongs is found in Deut 32:35 and 41, quoted in Rom 12:19.

done any good deed, you have God to repay you. Let the care for both cases be in his hands.

'Be quick to give, if anyone asks you for anything; in this way mutual love is engendered. But if someone through fraud or force robs you of what is yours, let him keep it, rather than stooping to an argument over it. It is better to lose your money, your house, or your land than to desert higher goods in the effort to recover these things.[33]

'And let your whole life be free from deceit; instead, whatever each one wishes to be done towards himself by others, if the situation calls for it, let him do that for his neighbour. And what he does not want done against himself, let him not devise against his neighbour; for that is to love your neighbour not otherwise than yourself.[34] Each and every person is dear to himself and does not demand from himself any reward for love. So let love for your neighbour also be straightforward and without recompense, ready to do good whenever there is need, without regard for a payment to come back to you but only for the reason that he is your neighbour, even if he is never going to return the favour and is not even going to respond in reciprocal love. Expect the reward for both your love and your good deed from God alone.[35]

'For if you love those who love you, what reward will you demand from God? Love is repaid with love. One who returns the love of a lover, not being himself about to love unless his love is returned, is far from gospel love, which embraces friends and enemies alike. Indeed, as for anyone who returns the love of one who loves him, what remarkable thing worthy of the sublimity of the gospel is he doing? Don't those who love this world and are otherwise sinners still by natural inclination love the person who loves them

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33 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 406C quotes verse 30b and specifies, 'He speaks of clothing, house, land, beast of burden, and in general all wealth'; he is summarized by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 6:10).
In paraphrasing verses 29 and 30 Erasmus follows the text of Luke in switching from second-person plural pronouns and verb endings to second-person singular, a change that is invisible in modern English but can be traced in AV. Erasmus commented in the *1535* annotation *et qui te percusserit* (on 6:29) that the change from plural to singular emphasizes to the hearers that each of them individually was being addressed. The same variation appears in the paraphrase on verses 34 and 35.

34 Here Erasmus has added the negative reciprocal of 'love your neighbour as yourself,' familiar from Lev 19:18b and Matt 19:19.

35 Erasmus anticipates verse 35 and its paraphrase. Nicholas of Lyra (on 6:32) remarks, 'That is, the reward to be paid in eternal life, a reward he calls "nothing" because [reciprocal affection] does not proceed from a love that extends to all humankind and therefore does not deserve a reward.'

and shun the person who does not respond with reciprocal love? And if you do good to those who have done you good, what reward are you owed? That is not the beneficence of the gospel but a reciprocation of benefits. Indeed, sinners too, and those far from the sublimity of proclaiming the gospel, by natural inclination repay good deeds they have received and detest ingratitude. Not to do so is quite shameful; to do it calls for no great praise.

'Also, if you make loans to those from whom you expect to get back your full amount, what are you doing that is worthy of the gospel's freshness? Don't evil people make loans to evil people and take loans in turn? It's an ordinary matter of doing business, to make a timely loan so that a loan may be made to you in turn. A service delivered with the expectation of service in return is no pure service. If a neighbour needs your help and asks for a loan, give it, even if there is no hope of the money being paid back; but give with the intention that if he does not pay it back, you want it to be a gift, not a loan.[36]

'Let both your love and your doing of good deeds be without expectation of return. Wish well even to those who wish you ill. Do good to those who either will not return a good deed or will repay a good deed with an evil one. And give a loan with the intention that even if nothing comes back to you, you are still happy to assist a neighbour. There is no danger that you will lose your reward; indeed, God will pay a reward more abundantly the less it was repaid or expected by mortals. And when you do so, the Most High will recognize you as his true children if you imitate his goodness as your abilities permit. For by nature he is so beneficent that he bestows all this generosity not just on the good but also on the wicked. For he gives a share in life to everyone. Then he has equipped heaven and earth with so many adornments, so many riches, so many conveniences for the use of even the ungodly, by his mildness and mercy challenging the wicked to repent and stirring the good to express their thanks.[37]

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36 The Vulgate translator had used *mutuum* 'a loan' in both verses 34 and 35, but in 34b he switched to *foenerare* 'to make a loan at interest.' In every case the Greek word is δανίζειν 'to make a loan,' whether with or without interest. Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 18 PL 57 208 noted that the δάνεισμα 'loan' (Chrysostom's word) mentioned in Matt 5:42 is not a loan with interest but simply a loan for use, and cites Luke 6:35. Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 6:34–5a) had criticized the translator's variation because loans for interest were not allowed among the Jews in any case, Lev 25:36–7 and Deut 23:19–20. The sinners of 34b are those who make interest-free loans but with the expectation that the favour will be returned as needed. In an annotation *peccatores peccatoribus foenerantur* (on 6:34) Erasmus makes the same point.

37 For the adornments and conveniences of life available to all, good and bad, see Matt 5:45 and Acts 14:15–16, with Job 5:9–10 and Pss 65:5–13, 145:8–10. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1743B, alluding to the Matthew passage, comments

'As his true children, you ought to reflect your Father's generous beneficence, which is accessible to everyone, so that, following his model as much as you are able, you strive in every way to do good to all: both to good people that they may become better, and to evil persons that they may be challenged to improve by your gentleness. If God, who knows the hearts of all mortals, is still, out of the goodness of his nature, so kind to so many who do not deserve it, in whom he knows his generosity will go to waste, how much more ought you do the same, you who often are unaware of whether the recipients of aid are worthy or unworthy and the outcome is uncertain?[38] For it often happens that those who on first appearance seem to be evil are good, and again that those who are now very bad soon turn to a better way of thinking, especially since each one is going to learn by experience that God will be to him as he shows himself to be towards his neighbour.

'This too is part of Christian gentleness and simplicity, to take in the better sense the words and actions of a neighbour that are unclear as to the spirit in which they are done. For the simple heart is always readier to think well than to think badly of a thing. In manifest evils, however – such as disparagement, foul language, theft, adultery – the duty of your goodness will be to heal the faults as much as you can, not to hate the persons themselves or to take vengeance on them.[39] Do not, therefore, judge anyone; in this way you will not be judged in turn. Do not condemn anyone; in this way you will not be condemned in turn. Forgive whatever has been done against you, and in turn God will forgive you your sins.[40]

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here on the wide extent of God's generosity; his points are summarized in the *Gloss* (on 6:36). Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 408B has the same idea but expressed in different language.

38 God knows the hearts of all mortals: see eg 1 Chron 28:9, Jer 17:10, Acts 1:24.

39 Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 23 (24) PG 57 307–8 acknowledges that there are situations when one must judge – such as master and servant, parent and child, or friend and friend – but notes that the injunction against judging applies to sinful persons observing their moral betters, and that all correction is to be done gently, without making an enemy of the other person. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 408C–D says that the injunction means we are to understand actions of doubtful intent for the better; he lists as cases where the immorality is unambiguous sexual misconduct, blasphemy, thievery, drunkenness, and the like. The *Gloss* (on 6:37) has a similar comment without specific examples; Hugh of St Cher (on 6:37) 169r quotes Bede on not judging behaviour whose moral aspect is not yet clear.

40 'Forgive' is *remittere* (Vulg *dimittere*); see chapter 5 n36. In a *1519* annotation *dimittite et dimittetur vobis* (on 6:37) Erasmus commented with disbelief on the fuss made by some over his preference for *remittere* over *dimittere* in the Lord's Prayer and cites Augustine in a sermon on Isa 1:11 and Ps 139:1, who quotes

'Be generous and kind to your neighbour, and your kindness will come back to you with much interest. For good measure will be poured back into your bosom, packed tight, shaken down, and abundant,[41] even if no repayment of kindness returns to you from humans. The same measure with which you measured out your generosity to your neighbour will be returned as your reward. If you are tight fisted and stingy towards your neighbour, you will realize a like recompense.'[42]

Then in order to impress these things more on the hearts of his followers, our Lord Jesus added a comparison: 'Is a blind person at all able to be the leader of a blind person? And if he tries it, won't they both surely fall into a ditch? A person who wishes to precede another ought himself to be clear of any complaint. How will one who is himself in the grip of error teach someone else what is to be done? "But it's hard to put up with the obstinate wickedness of some people." Why do you find it burdensome to put up with what I put up with? Or is it fair for the position of the pupil to be better than that of the teacher? He would be quite good enough if he were to be his

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the phrase in Luke 6:37 as *remittite et remittetur vobis*; see Augustine *Sermones de scripturis* 42 PL 38 253.

41 'Packed tight, shaken down, and abundant' is *conferta, agitata, et exuberans*. The first is identical to the Vulgate's adjective; the second is the simple form, with not much change in meaning, of the Vulgate's compound *coagitata*; and the third is a classical Latin equivalent of the double-prefixed *supereffluentem*, not a classical word but one picked up by Christian writers from Luke 6:38. In *1522* Erasmus added an annotation *et supereffluentem* (on 6:38), complimenting, perhaps ironically, the Vulgate translator for capturing the force of the double-prefixed Greek ὑπερεκχυνόμενον but still did not use it in the paraphrase; in 1519 he had dropped it from his NT in favour of *exundans* 'overflowing.' See the annotation in ASD VI-5 519 903–7nn.

42 Cf 2 Cor 9:6 and Prov 22:8. The first of these is cited by Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 600D and Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 409B, followed by the *Gloss* (on 6:39). Erasmus concludes the paraphrase on verse 38 with a heavy use of money figures: *faenus* 'interest,' *liberalitas* 'generosity,' *praemium* 'reward,' *contracti parcique* 'tight fisted and stingy,' and *remuneratio* 'recompense.' He may have been influenced by the financial language of loans in verses 34–5 and the fact that Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 409B–C took the metaphorical language of the blind leading the blind and pupils trying to be superior to their teachers, coming in the next verses, as referring particularly to *elemosina* 'charitable giving,' as well as to forgiving others' sins that are no different from one's own sins. Bede does agree that the comparisons of verses 39–40 all elaborate on the exhortation to be merciful in verse 36. This point is more clearly made by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 777A, Hugh of St Cher (on 6:40–41) 169V, and in the *Catena aurea* (on 6:39).

teacher's equal.[43] Then why do you present yourself to your neighbour as a harsh judge when you yourself are bound by graver ills? Why are you so sharp eyed for other people's faults when you are blind to your own wrongdoings? Why do you see the speck in your brother's eye and do not regard the beam that is in your own eye?

'In fact, with what brashness could you say to your brother, "Brother, permit me to get the speck out of your eye" when you yourself do not discern the beam fixed in your eye? True goodness is a more merciful judge towards others and a sterner disciplinarian towards itself. On the other hand, counterfeit holiness pursues a reputation of uprightness for itself if, turning a blind eye to its own errors, it raves relentlessly against the human failings of others. Do you condemn your brother for what he eats or drinks, and yourself plot your neighbour's destruction? Listen, you counterfeiter of righteousness! If you really want to be righteous, first get the beam from your own eye, and then, if it seems right, you will discern how to remove the speck from your brother's eye. As it is, in a perversion of judgment you are making[44] pets of your own evils and making a show of other people's; you are mild and restrained towards your own evils and savage against other people's. Why do you claim for yourselves praise for holiness from things that can be common to good people and bad? Neither clothing nor food nor long-winded prayers nor broad phylacteries show that a person is good.[45]

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43 In the *1516* annotation *si sit sicut magister eius* (on 6:40) Erasmus pointed out that the Greek text says 'but every one that is perfect shall be as his master' (AV; RSV 'everyone when he is fully taught will be like his teacher'), not the Vulgate version 'but every one shall be perfect if he be as his master' (DV). The issue is *si* 'if,' which has no equivalent in the Greek; Erasmus dropped it from his NT in *1519*. He comments in the annotation that the point is that the Lord does not want the student to claim more than the teacher and try to precede him; his perfection will be enough if he is like the teacher. In the paraphrase Erasmus clarifies in accordance with his annotation.

44 'Making pets ... show of other people's' is *tuis ipsius malis blandiris aliena elevas* in *1535* and LB. In *1523* and *1524* the sentence read *tuis ipsius bonis blandiris exaggeras aliena* 'making pets of your good things and heaping up / amplifying other people's.' In *1534 exaggeras* 'heaping up / amplifying' was replaced by *elevas* 'elevating,' and in *1535 bonis* 'good things' was replaced by *malis* 'evils.' In classical Latin *elevo*, *elevare* meant 'raise' or 'make light of' but not 'make a display of'; see the word in L&S. By medieval times *elevo* and its noun *elevatio* came to describe the lifting of the consecrated host for display during the mass; see R.E. Latham *Revised Medieval Latin Word-list from British and Irish Sources* (Oxford 1965) and that emphatic 'showing' may have led to a sarcastic application here.

45 Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 777D–780A says that both the discussion of the speck and the beam and the following simile of the fruits of good and bad trees can be understood as referring to the Jews.

'For a tree is not valued for its leaves but for its fruit. And the fruit draws its sap from the root. If the sap is bitter, the tree cannot produce sweet fruit; but if it is good, the tree can bear no other fruit than what matches its sap. Leaves and bark are visible and are deceptive. The sap and the root are not visible.[46] If the heart is corrupt, whatever comes from it is bad; if it is sound, whatever is produced from it is sound. Each and every tree has its own fruit, which cannot be disguised. For the fig is not gathered from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a bramble bush.

'Good fruit is whatever a good person produces, no matter what he eats or wears or how he is clothed, or what he does of things that are in themselves neither good nor evil but have the appearance of godliness rather than true godliness. If a good person eats, he acts rightly; if he does not eat, he acts rightly, for either one proceeds from a good intention.[47] But whatever an evil person does is evil, because it proceeds from a corrupt heart – however he is clothed, whether he fasts or feasts, whether he prays or doesn't.

'Do you want to know the fruits of the gospel tree, whose root is filled with the sweet sap of faith and love?[48] He loves everyone, hates no one, wishes well even to his enemies, so far is he from causing injury to anyone. He prays for good for those by whom he is cursed. He prays for the salvation of those by whom he is accused falsely. He strives to save those by whom he is slain; he strives to do good to everyone without return, waiting for his reward from God. He thinks ill of no one. Whatever is ambiguous in meaning he takes in the better sense. He condemns no one but, himself leaving judgment to God, strives only to deserve well of him. He endures the ungodly so they may repent. He admonishes an errant neighbour in a friendly fashion;

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46 Erasmus here interprets good and bad fruit of trees as sweet and bitter, as he tends to do also in the paraphrase on the parallel at Matt 7:16 CWE 45 135. For the deceptiveness of plentiful leaves, see Matt 21:19 and Mark 11:13, and for the association of a good man and a fruitful tree, Ps 1:3 (with Erasmus' 1515 exposition CWE 63 33–52, where he gives far more detail on the cultivation of fruit trees) and Jer 17:7–8, quoted by Hugh of St Cher (on 6:43) 170r.

47 Cf Rom 14:2–17 and 1 Cor 8:11.

48 There are several lists of good and bad 'fruits of the spirit' in the Epistles, such as Gal 5:22–3, quoted here by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 410D–411A, and Eph 5:9–10, but Erasmus' list is influenced by Jesus' whole preceding discourse from verse 27 on. Likewise the following negative portrayal of the pharisaical Jew depends on the portrait of scribes and Pharisees opposed to Jesus since the beginning of his teaching and healing ministry in chapter 4. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1743C–D says bad fruit is the synagogue; Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 23 (24) PG 57 317 says that Jews seem to be figured in the bad trees and bad fruit. See n45.

he freely forgives one who sins against him and does not remember the offence. When you see these fruits, recognize a tree of the gospel, because it has fruit worthy of the gospel.

'Now, please, learn the fruit of the tree whose root is infected with the bitter sap of pharisaic arrogance, malice, and greed. He wishes no one well, except for himself alone, and does not love his friends except in his own interest. He puts his own glory before the glory of God; he is an avenger of wrongs, even himself a doer of wrong. He prides himself even on his evil deeds and slanders the good deeds of others. He takes thought for his own private advantage at his neighbours' expense. His words are at variance with his intentions. He has neither faith in God nor love for his neighbour; he boasts about himself but condemns others; he is indulgent towards himself and a harsh critic of a misguided brother. And though these are the fruits he bears, in his leaves and bark he gives the appearance of a good tree. He strolls about in broad phylacteries, he is forever washing, he rests on the sabbath, he shuns conversation with tax collectors but is attentive to rich widows; he is savage to the poor and a flatterer of the rich. He fasts regularly, at least in public; at home he is a slave to gluttony. He prays verbosely: he has Law, temple, God at the tip of his tongue. But on occasion there is an eruption of what lies hidden in his heart, where the treasure of goods and evils is stored up. So whenever a situation presses hard, then that appearance of painted-on holiness vanishes, and what was stored up in his heartstrings shows itself. An injury is tossed out, an insult is fired at one who doesn't deserve it, he is dragged off to prison, he is stripped of his riches.

'In such a case the good man brings forth a good thing from the good treasure in his heart. He does not return one injury with a worse one, but either bears it or repays it with a good deed. He replies with a mild and calm remark to anyone insulting him. If he is dragged off to prison he gives thanks to God; he takes the loss of his property with joy. But contrary to all these, the pharisaical tree shows far different fruits when the occasion presents itself. God cannot be fooled, for he sees clearly the innermost recesses of the heart. Nor is he moved by corporeal ceremonies, which frequently fool mortals with a false image of holiness. They speak respectfully and plot disgrace.[49]

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49 Erasmus changes the subject of the last sentence in verse 45 from the singular in the text of Luke (where 'he speaks' refers to the evil man who is the subject of the preceding sentence) to plural ('they speak) perhaps to make the allusion to Pharisees in general clearer. For the power of God to see into the human heart, see n38. For Erasmus' continuation of the tree imagery in paraphrasing a verse that speaks of treasure, cf Hugh of St Cher (on 6:45) 170v, who says that

'For what good does it do that you address me with respect, repeatedly adding the title "Lord," when you disregard what I teach? If you acknowledge me as Lord, obey my commandments.[50] If you do not acknowledge me, what is the point of the "Lord" addressed to me? When a situation requires obedience, the honour due your Lord must be shown in your actions. It is keeping the commandments that proves the servant faithful, not a polite form of address.'

After this, what the Lord had taught in the comparison of the good and bad trees, whose fruits must be judged from the very root, he impressed also in a comparison of the building that will either give way or not when storms threaten. For what the root is to a tree, the foundation is to a structure.[51] What the leaves are on a tree, the appearance of a building is, which charms those looking at it from outside. 'I will show you,' he said, 'what the person is like who comes to me with a pure heart and so heeds my words that when the situation requires, he brings forth from his heart's treasure proofs of complete virtue. He is like a prudent constructor, who builds a house not for empty show or a temporary purpose but for a solidity that will not give way to any storm. So he digs deep and lays a solid foundation upon rock.[52] On this foundation he builds. Then when a flood comes, or a strong windstorm, it cannot be moved by either the force of the rushing waters or

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Luke now calls a treasure what he had earlier called a root, and that both mean 'intention' or 'will,' whose fruit is a (good) work or speech.

50 The connection between love of God and obedience to his commandments is found eg in John 14:15 and 15:10, and in 1 John 2:5, and is a major theme of Psalm 119. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1744A comments here on the association.

51 With this sentence Erasmus integrates the figure of the good and bad trees with the figure of the good and bad builders and their buildings. He had done the same in the parallel paraphrase on Matt 7:24–7; see CWE 45 137–8.
While the Vulgate text of Luke 6:48–9 uses the terms *aedificare* and *aedificans* for 'build' and 'builder,' with *domus* for 'house,' the paraphrase often replaces *domus* with *aedificium* 'building' and alternates *aedificare* and *aedificans* with *struere* 'construct' and its compounds and *structor* 'constructor.' The translation follows Erasmus' use of these terms.

52 'Upon rock' is *super petram*. In a *1522* annotation *supra petram* (on 6:48) Erasmus says that the Greek expression used here ἐπὶ πέτραν does not suggest 'above rock' (implying, as ἄνω πέτρας would, space or lack of attachment between rock and superstructure) but 'on top of rock,' which in Latin can be either *super petram* or (he added in *1527*) *in petra*. The *1522* reading *super* is not noted in ASD VI-5 519 or in the edition of Anne Reeve *Erasmus' Annotations on the New Testament: The Gospels* (London 1986), though it is in the Basel 1522 edition of the *Annotations*. Here he changes his Latin preposition to *super* with *petram*, as he had in his NT. The phrase *super petram* appears in Ps 40 (Vulg 39):3 'He . . . set

the strength of the winds because it rests on a solid foundation. Then again, he who comes to me to hear what I teach but does not put my instruction deep down into his heart is like a thoughtless constructor, who builds as if no storm will ever come. Since he is not concerned about a solid foundation but constructs high for show, as soon as a flood or a windstorm comes up, what he constructed immediately collapses, and the more grandly he built for empty show, the greater the collapse when the building falls. So whatever relies on ceremonies, Pharisaic regulations, observance of corporeal practices is a building that will give way whenever injuries, losses, disgraces, death, or some otherwise serious storm of adverse fortune happens.'[53]

Chapter 7

When our Lord Jesus had spoken in conversations of this kind, with which he regularly prepared his disciples and the people for the sublimity of gospel philosophy, he returned to Capernaum, a city in which he often spent time. And again there was another kind of opportunity for doing miracles so that the authority of his teaching would be confirmed by the sublimity of his deeds.[1]

There was a centurion there who had a house slave who was in such mortal danger from a paralysis that he was now close to death.[2] The situation

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my feet upon a rock,' a verse cited in discussion of the parallel account in Matt 7:24–7 by Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 51C.

53 The list of possible difficulties echoes that given by Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 24 (25) PG 57 323–4 as symbolized by the rains and floods that strike the well or poorly built house. Erasmus adds here another reference to pharisaical reliance on outward appearance, a point that he made above in the paraphrase on verse 42, 201 with the note there. His interpretation of the heedless constructor / builder as building for show, not a motive clearly suggested by the Gospel text here but found eg in 20:45–6 and Matt 6:1–5, 23:1–7, appears also in his paraphrase on this discourse in Matt 7:24–7; see n51.

1 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1744A similarly comments on this episode as a demonstration of the precepts of the sermon in chapter 6. Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:1) connects the second half of chapter 6 and the miracle at the beginning of chapter 7: 'After Christ's instruction has been described, confirmation of the same instruction is placed here immediately following.'

2 The nature of the illness, paralysis, and the additional detail that the slave was *domi* 'in the house,' ie a house slave and presumably one whom the centurion knew better than slaves assigned work outside, comes from the parallel description in Matt 8:6. That the slave's illness put his life in danger reflects the version in John 4:47.

tormented the man's heart, who valued him not in terms of his slave status but for the loyalty and honesty of his character, and in so doing proved the inhumanity of certain people who regard their slaves as in no other position than their horses and cattle.[3] So when he learned that Jesus had entered Capernaum, he privately persuaded some leaders of the Jews to ask the Lord in his name to consent to come to his house and heal his slave. It was from modesty, not distrust, that the centurion, first of all a gentile and also of the military class, addressed the Lord through others.[4]

But they, when they came to Jesus, suspected that so great an act of kindness would scarcely be obtained for a slave and for a gentile and centurion. So they made their plea to him with much care: 'Take no account of his being a gentile and a soldier or of this kindness being asked for a soldier's slave. For in every other way he is worthy of your doing him this service.

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3 The comment cited above in chapter 6 n33 by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 406C–D, about yielding one's possessions to another who claims to them, continues: 'But whether [this rule] is to be applied to slaves is a great question. For a Christian ought not to possess a slave as he does a horse or a silver object. Yet it could happen that the horse is worth more than the slave, and something made of gold or silver much more. But if the slave is brought up or directed by you his master to the worship of God better ... than he can expect at the hands of one who wants to take him from you, I don't know that anyone would dare to say he ought to be treated like a piece of clothing. For a human being ought to love a human being as himself, whom the God of human beings commands to love even his enemies.' Hugh of St Cher (on 7:4) 171v expresses a similar idea in different words. He also says (on 7:2) 171v that *pretiosus* 'valuable' in verse 2 can mean either 'expensive' or 'dear' (*charus*); Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:2) says it means 'dear and beloved.' Erasmus here avoids *pretiosus*; he had said in the annotation *qui erat illi pretiosus* (on 7:2) that *pretiosus* is restricted to 'valuable' things, not people, and that a better translation of the Greek would have been *charus* 'dear' (which can be applied to both affections and monetary value, as in English).

4 Matt 8:5–6 represents the centurion as addressing Jesus directly. Traditional exegesis pointed out that sending emissaries as spokesmen still implies that the effective speaker is the one who sent them, and that Matthew's account is abbreviated for the sake of narrative speed: Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 26 (27) PG 57 335–6, Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.20 PL 34 1101, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 414D quoted by Hugh of St Cher (on 7:3) 171v and the *Catena aurea* (on 7:2–3), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:3).
According to Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1744C, followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 415C, the *Gloss* (on 7:3), and Hugh of St Cher (on 7:3) 171v, the centurion did not go himself but sent messengers because he feared that, being a man of rank and power, he would seem to be requesting a favour in return for the favour of his presence. Cf the exegesis of 6:33–4 with the next paragraph and next note here.

Indeed, he is a friend of our people, and has built us a synagogue.'[5] Then, to show that in his eyes no person was worthless who was recommended by his faith, Jesus made his way to the place where he was summoned.[6]

And when he was already close to the house where the slave lay sick, the centurion, aware of Jesus' approach, sent friends to meet him and to say, 'Sir,[7] there is no need for you to take the trouble to come here. Your kindness offers more than I dared to ask for. I recognize your honourable position, and I am not ignorant of myself: I am a gentile, I am a centurion, and it is only a matter of a slave. I judge myself unworthy to have you come under my roof, and for this reason I did not dare to come to you. For the Jews think that they are defiled by contact with us, because we are strangers to the religion and worship of God, and are in bondage to many kinds of sin. But the great sorrow of my heart and my complete confidence in you have made me dare to ask for healing for my servant. You can provide that with a word. This is too humble and too slight to be done by you in person. I draw this conclusion from myself. For I am a man subordinate to another's control, whose orders I obey; and I have soldiers subordinate to me who carry out my orders. And it is not necessary for me personally to attend to everything. But if there is some fairly humble matter, I say to this man, "Go," and he goes; I say to another, "Come," and he comes; I say to one of my slaves, "Do this," and he obeys and does it. If my giving orders has so much authority that without my troubling myself what I want is carried out by men subordinate to me, how much more will anything be done that you assign to your subordinates[8] with just a word, without your troubling yourself?'

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5 According to Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 26 (27) PG 57 335–6 and 337–8, the Jews here use flattery to deal with the centurion of the occupying forces, as men living in a difficult situation do; it was probably their idea, though a poor one, to intercede for the centurion by reference to his kindly feelings for the Jews. When he has gotten rid of them, he sends his own people as his messengers (in verse 6) and comes himself, as Erasmus will say on verse 10 below. The *Catena aurea* (on 7:3) gives a version of Chrysostom's view.

6 That God has no regard for the station in life of his mortal worshippers is an OT theme, as in Deut 10:17–18, reiterated in the NT, eg in Peter's speech in Acts 10:34–5.

7 'Sir' is *Domine*, in other speakers' mouths often 'Lord'; cf CWE 46 55 n21.

8 'Your subordinates' is *tuis*, normally 'your men' or 'your followers,' an idiomatic use of the possessive adjective without a noun and frequent in classical Latin in military writing. Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 53A–B, explicating the parallel passage at Matt 8:9, says that the centurion means that as his soldiers and slaves obey him, so Jesus can accomplish what he pleases through the services of the angels.

Jesus was delighted with this speech, full both of affection for the slave and of the man's modest opinion of himself and also of his amazing trust in the Lord. He stopped and showed amazement in his expression – not that what he was hearing was news to him, since he knew the centurion's heart before these words were spoken.[9] But he did it to commend trust in God to the Jews by his amazement and to rebuke their own unbelief by the example of a gentile and a soldier. So postponing his answer, the Lord turned to the throng of Jews who accompanied him and said, 'I assure you most definitely of this, that up till now I have not found so much faith even in the people of Israel.' For the elders were less trusting, since they were asking for the actual presence of the Lord, and suspected that he would not heal a gentile's slave unless they mentioned the man's enthusiasm for the people of Israel: as if the Lord gave his acts of kindness to human feelings or to a person's rank and not rather to the faith of the petitioner.

Thus Jesus assured them that gentiles and sinners (in the Jews' estimation) would be welcomed into the position of the people of Israel on the recommendation of their faith, while those who, though children of Abraham by birth, had made themselves unworthy of such an ancestor by their unbelief would be rejected. Then he said to the centurion (who by now had come up himself),[10] 'Go, for what you believe can be done has been done. Your slave is well.' Moreover, when the centurion was returning home, he learned from the servants who came to meet him that the slave had been suddenly released from his illness at the very same time that the Lord had said, 'Your slave lives.' This was certainly an image of the gentiles who would come into a share of gospel grace by pure faith, without keeping the law of Moses, yet with a kind of recommendation from the Law. For the Law was a pupil's guide towards Christ; and preaching started from the Jews and went to the gentiles.[11] Indeed, in the figurative interpretation of this event, it is Jewish

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9 That Jesus knows what is in human hearts without being told is a common theme; cf eg chapter 3 107 with n20, and the paraphrase on 7:40, 206.

10 For the centurion's appearance in person, not in Luke but in Matthew, see n4.

11 'Pupil's guide' (*paedagogus*); the first part of this sentence echoes Gal 3:24, where *paedagogus* is translated 'schoolmaster' in AV, 'custodian' in RSV, and 'disciplinarian' in NRSV. The Latinized Greek word describes the attendant, typically a slave, who accompanied a Roman or Greek child on the walk to and from school, and probably had some responsibility for overseeing the child's behaviour and homework. The second half of the sentence summarizes the part of Acts that describes the growth of the early church to include a mission to the gentiles; cf Acts 10–15, especially 11:19–20.

elders who commend the centurion's case to Jesus and lead to the centurion's home the one they were going to chase out of their temple.[12]

But so that the seed of gospel teaching would be scattered more broadly, the Lord moved often from place to place. So, having left Capernaum, he happened to be passing the city of Naim. That is about two miles south of Mount Tabor, not far from Endor.[13] His disciples, of whom there was now a great number,[14] accompanied him on the journey, and with them a large group of an ample crowd of all kinds of people. Now when our Lord Jesus was not far from the city gate, look, an occasion for a new miracle: a funeral procession was taking place, with a large throng of people. Indeed, it was a sight to bring tears: first because a young man had died, taken in the very flower of life, and then because the deceased was the only son of a widow who, bereft of a husband's comfort, had put all her hope for her livelihood in her son.[15] Hence in her tears and in the pitiable words that unrestrained grief generally supplies, she bore witness to the torment of her heart. The crying of the widow and the untimely death of the young man brought others, who accompanied the funeral out of respect, to tears too.

When our merciful Lord Jesus saw this sight, he took pity on the widow and showed himself an effective comforter to her who had no comforter, setting out to assist her in both word and deed. 'Woman,' he said, 'do not weep.' So saying he went up to the bier on which the deceased was carried

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12 The typological interpretation of the Jews as facilitators of their Messiah's introduction to the gentile world is found in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1744A, Augustine *Sermones de scripturis* 62 PL 38 416, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 608D–609A, and Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 414D. Bede, however, thinks that the Jews are involved so that they may be found without excuse for unbelief if the miracle does not move them, and also that the patriarchs and prophets are not being spoken of in 7:9, only Jews of Jesus' day; he is echoed by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 7:9) and Hugh of St Cher (on 7:9) 172r.

13 The location of Endor two miles south of Mount Tabor is given by Jerome *De locis Hebraicis* PL 23 875B and 914B, passages combined by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 417B, who is followed by the *Gloss* (on 7:11), Hugh of St Cher (on 7:11) 172r, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:11).

14 In 'of whom there was now a great number' Erasmus explicates the Greek word ἱκανοί 'considerable, numerous enough' that he found in his Greek manuscripts but that was (and is) not represented in the Latin. He had remarked on the omission and defended it as 'many' in an annotation *discipuli eius* (on 7:11). The Greek word is not included in modern editions; see Nestle-Aland on this verse.

15 'Livelihood' is *vita*, both 'life' and 'livelihood, support for living'; cf chapter 6 189 with n10 above.

and touched it with his hand. The pallbearers stopped on the spot. With each group intent on the outcome, both the one accompanying the widow and the one accompanying the Lord, Jesus turned to the lifeless youth and said, 'Young man, I tell you, get up.'

At this command, as if awakened from sleep, the young man sat up on the bier; and so that the proof of life restored would be more certain, he began to speak. His words also showed his mental vigour.[16] And when the youth had leapt down from the bier and, clinging to Jesus, through whom he realized that his life had been restored, was thanking him, the Lord handed him over to his mother, to take back home alive, walking on his own feet, the person that four pallbearers had carried out dead.[17]

And certainly the deed was done in this way on the literal level not without meaning for spiritual teaching.[18] The widowed mother is an image of the church. She is indeed the widow whom the prophet Isaiah comforts, saying, 'Rejoice, o barren one, you who do not bear children; exult, you who do not give birth, for there will be more sons of the deserted woman than of her who has a husband' [Gal 4:27].[19] The synagogue trusts in her husband

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16 Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:15) says that the young man began to speak so that it would be quite clear that he was truly revived, not only in appearance, as, Nicholas says, Simon the magician 'revived' a dead man (cf Acts 8:9–24 and ODCC at 'Simon Magus').

17 Erasmus borrows the detail that he was walking on his own feet from the healing of the paralysed man, 6:25.

18 Here begins a typological interpretation of the narrative that follows a long exegetical tradition of which Ambrose and Bede are notable representatives. The resuscitation of the widow's son is one of three resuscitations or resurrections that Jesus performed during his earthly ministry, and is unique to this Gospel. The other two are the revival of the daughter of Jairus, told in 8:40–2 and 48–56, Matt 9:18–26, Mark 5:21–4 and 35–43, and the raising of Lazarus, John 11:1–44. Though Erasmus does not specifically mention the three as a set, they are often grouped as part of the interpretations in the tradition and influence some of what he says below.

19 That the widow symbolizes the church, who is a widow because her husband Jesus has left the world for heaven (mentioned just below), is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1745B, Augustine *Sermones de scripturis* 98 PL 38 591, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 417C, the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 7:12), Hugh of St Cher (on 17:11) 172r, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:12–15 *moraliter*). Cf the Pauline allegory of Sarah and Hagar in Gal 4:21–31.
Gal 4:27 quotes Isa 54:1, but Erasmus' Latin text here follows the wording as translated from the LXX by Jerome in *Commentarii in Isaiam* PL 24 514D–515A and used almost word for word in the Vulgate Gal 4:27 more nearly than it does the Vulgate of Isaiah. Erasmus modifies the Galatians text by replacing *erumpe et*

Moses. She boasts that the offspring of Abraham are equal in number to the sand on the seashore.[20] The church appears in the world's eyes to be abandoned by her husband, who withdrew into heaven, and at first she seemed barren and without hope of posterity, since the Jews and the princes of this world were acting to ensure that all memory of Jesus, whom they thought dead, would be utterly removed. This widow daily gives birth not to children of this age but to children of light.[21] Nor does she bear them to Moses, who teaches earthly things, but to Christ, who teaches and promises things heavenly. Moreover, she bears them not to death but to immortality. Also, she gives birth daily to infants still shapeless and incomplete until they drink of the gospel spirit and Christ is formed in them.[22] She is their true mother, and she loves her sons in a singular way, shaping and instructing them with great care until they mature and become strengthened into perfected men. For godliness too has its infancy and its advance in age.[23] But if ever it happens that one of her sons dies, she weeps inconsolably and wails just as if the one she had lost had been her only son. Innocence, which is bestowed by faith in the gospel, is life; sin is death.[24] We see with how much feeling mothers mourn dead bodies, but much more tenderly does the church wail for a person who has slipped from his baptismal state back into mortal guilt; and she worries more about the death of one sinner than the synagogue rejoices about ninety-nine righteous souls.[25]

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clama 'break forth and shout' with *exulta* 'exult,' substituting *quia* 'because' with *quoniam* 'because, for,' and using the more properly classical *plures filii . . . quam* 'more sons than' for *multi filii . . . magis quam* 'many sons . . . more than.'

20 See Gen 22:17–18.

21 For 'children of this age' and 'children of light,' cf 16:8.

22 For an infant's incomplete form and need for shaping by its mother, cf Gal 4:19 and the story of Virgil's comment on his method of composing verses, that 'he like a mother bear gives birth to them and then licks them into shape,' Suetonius' life of Virgil in his fragmentary *De poetis*.

23 The language of intellectual and moral formation common eg in Quintilian *Institutio oratoria* 1.1–4 and 4.1.6, and Horace *Satires* 1.4.105–29 and *Odes* 3.24 is reapplied here to spiritual formation at the hands of the church. For the idea that mother church gives birth daily, ie in the baptism of new Christians, see Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 417D, who quotes Gal 4:19. For the image of the infancy and spiritual growth of the Christian, cf 1 Cor 3:2 with the passage that follows it and 1 Pet 2:2.

24 For the comparison of the church mourning a Christian lost to sin with a widowed mother mourning the death of an only son, see Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1746A and Hugh of St Cher (on 7:12) 172r.

25 Erasmus' language here alludes to Jesus' teaching in 15:3–7 and Matt 18:12–14 about the good shepherd rejoicing more at finding one lost sheep than over the

The deceased, then, was carried in procession by four pallbearers, that is, by the desires of this world, which carry to the tomb of endless despair a person abandoned by the Holy Spirit, lacking self-awareness, fast asleep in his own faults.[26] Moreover, the church has her gates through which she casts out the dead, lest others too be contaminated by the stench of the corpse. She has gates through which she welcomes back those called to life by the Lord.[27] As she does not bring anyone forth into life except by the spirit of Christ, so she does not recover anyone for life except by Christ's calling him back. The pallbearers do not stop until they reach the tomb. For one who has once come to rest in this world, who has once handed himself over to evil desires, does not cease slipping ever further into worse things in his unfortunate progress, until he reaches the depth of evil and has surrendered to his false understanding.[28] In the meantime the mother does nothing but cry, and the crowd

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ninety-nine safe ones, though here he changes the shepherd's mood to that of grief at loss and uses the comparison to deride the Jews.

26 There is no number given for the bearers in the Gospel. That there are four is asserted at least as early as Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1745C, who allegorizes them as the four material elements (fire, water, earth, and air), each of which he takes as related to a spiritual failing. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 418B–C, without giving a number, says the bearers are unclean desires or enticements to sin by evil companions; he is followed by the *Gloss* (on 7:14). Hugh of St Cher (on 7:12) 172r says the four are emotions: joy, sadness, hope, and fear; allegorically he adopts Ambrose's four elements and applies these to sins of body and spirit. Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:12) says the bearers are those who by deeds or words encourage a person to sin.

27 The gates (*portae*) of the church are the allegorical interpretation of the gate (*porta*) of the city mentioned in verse 12, and apparently allude to excommunication and reconciliation of a penitent. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 417D here interjects a paraphrase on Ps 118 (Vulg 117):19 that treats his own body as a city and ends, 'May no stench of a buried corpse meet it, but may salvation occupy its walls and praise its portals' (cf Isa 60:18). The 'stench' may also allude to the case of Lazarus, soon to be mentioned below and often associated with this incident, n18. Erasmus' view of excommunication and reconciliation is a traditional one based on 1 Cor 5:1–5 and 2 Cor 2:5–10; see his paraphrases on these, CWE 43 69–71 (with n5) and 212–13 respectively; a later representation of such views is found in his *Explanatio symboli* (1533) CWE 70 338–9 and 342–3. The theme will come up again 214–15 with n34. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 418C, echoed by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 7:15), says the repentant sinner 'is restored to his mother when through decrees of a priestly court he is joined to the communion of the church,' a process also noted by Hugh of St Cher (on 7:15) 172v, who uses the term 'reconciliation of a penitent.'

28 'False understanding' (*reprobum sensum*). Cf the expression *reprobi circa fidem* 'false as regards faith,' 2 Tim 3:8, describing the wicked people whom good Christians should avoid, with Erasmus' paraphrase CWE 44 50.

of citizens cries, grieving that the one it wants to live again is being cast out dead. These assuredly are the prayers of mother church, these the tears, these the groans of godly people grieving over the death of a sinner. The young man dies not yet strengthened by the gospel spirit, and on this account worthier of pity, because one whom they had hoped would advance, aided by the spirit of Christ, to the peak of gospel godliness they now see lifeless and empty of spirit, being carried to the hidden depths of the grave.

Yet still his mother accompanies him, his fellow citizens accompany him (for love can scarcely give up hope). With tears, with groaning, with lamentations they show what they wish for. Yet what they wish for they cannot provide. They are not strong enough to hold onto the lifeless one, they cannot rouse the dead. As far as human beings are concerned, he is irrevocably dead.[29] But all is well! Jesus comes in response to the tears of his church. The arrival of her Saviour is always a blessing. He sees his widow; his merciful gaze is always a blessing. He does not look at the dead man yet, who, because he does not think himself wretched did not yet seem deserving of Jesus' pity; but the passionate feeling of the church obtains what the lamented sinner does not even wish for. The Lord bids the mourning stop, raising hope of the joy that will follow. He moves his hand towards the bier; the bearers stop. The first hope for the innocence of a repentant person is that he proceeds no further in doing evil. One who ceases to be worse offers hope about himself, that some day he may be become better. And this only happens if Jesus deigns to touch the bier with his mighty hand. With it he puts an end to ungodly desires, so that a person who was being carried to the tomb ceases from evils. Indeed the church begs, beseeches, urges, scolds sinners to repent, to come to a halt from their vices. But all this would be in vain if Jesus were not touching the dead heart of the sinner with his secret power.

For Jesus is life for everyone, even for the dead. There is good hope that life will return when Jesus deigns to touch the bier; but the vigour of life does not return unless the Lord speaks to the dead person. The dead live again at his voice alone, even if they have been buried, even four days ago, lest anyone think that there are any sinners so lamented that the love of the church should abandon hope of their salvation. Lazarus had been carried out dead;

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29 The mother's crying is an exegetical deduction from Jesus' command in verse 13 'Do not weep,' and the crying of the mourners an extension of it. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1746A says that the mother's tears represent the tears of mother church, who intercedes for each of her sons like a widowed mother; Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 418A makes a similar point about the tears of the church in the course of asserting the mother's right to Jesus' pity; he is followed by the *Gloss* (on 7:12), Hugh of St Cher (on 7:12) 172r, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:12).

he had been buried; he was already rotting in the tomb. But in the meantime tears were being shed for him; and at Jesus' voice calling him, he came forth from his tomb.[30] Certainly Lazarus was raised with more effort, for on that occasion Jesus groaned in spirit; he wept and was troubled, not because it was harder for him to raise somebody four days in the tomb than one just now dead, but in order to demonstrate with what difficulty hardened sinners repent.[31] Jesus looked at the widow, and she stopped crying; he will look at a dead person, and that person will begin to live. And so our most merciful Lord turned to him who lay dead. 'Young man,' he said, 'I say to you, get up.' Anyone can live again who has heard Jesus' words, even if he is dead. For what Jesus says is spirit and life.[32] What happened next? He who was dead in his sins came to life again in innocence; he who before lay flat, lacking awareness of himself, raised himself upright and, what is the surest proof of an amended heart, began to speak, confessing his sins, giving thanks for divine mercy. He was returned to his mother alive again; he who earlier was being conveyed to his tomb with great lamentation from everyone was now escorted back home with greater joy from everyone. For true godliness has this quality, that it holds even dearer those who have turned from great sins to zeal for a better life. For the goodness of God shines out more brightly in them than in those who have never slipped into any wrongdong.[33]

The mother rejoices at the recovery of her son. Those who earlier were mourning his demise rejoice. And they do not just rejoice; but a kind of fear has seized all who were present at this sight. For the church publicly ejects

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30 See John 11:1–44 and its paraphrase CWE 46 139–46. 'Four days' alludes to Martha's warning about opening the tomb in John 11:39.

31 For allusions here to the resurrection of Lazarus, see n18. The tradition allegorizes Lazarus as a model of the most extreme sinner, only barely capable of repentance; see especially Augustine *Sermones de scripturis* 98 PL 38 593–4. Erasmus had already described Jesus' perturbation and groaning, reported in John 11:33 and 38, as having a didactic purpose, to instruct his disciples and their successors about the difficulty preachers have in awakening repentance in the hardened sinner; see the paraphrase on John 11:33–9 CWE 46 144–5 and the notes there. Here the emphasis is perhaps more on the sinner than on his spiritual guides.

32 Cf John 6:63.

33 That the first speech of the young man signifies confession of his sins (as his sitting up is a sign of his change of heart) is noted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 418C, followed by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 7:15) and Hugh of St Cher (on 7:15) 172v. The theme of greater joy in recovery and restoration of the sinner than in those who never backslid again foreshadows the parables of chapter 15; cf n25.

evildoers and incorrigibles from its fellowship as if they were corpses precisely so that from the example of one the many may be afraid to sin.[34] But the same many exalt in praise the mercy of God, by whose power the dead live again. For after they saw such a remarkable wonder, the people said, 'A great prophet has arisen among us, and God has regarded his people.'[35] To this point the Jews suspected nothing higher about Christ than that he was some noteworthy prophet.

But from this time on the reputation of the Lord Jesus grew, once the story of the deed was spread abroad not only through all of Judea but everywhere through all the area bordering the Jordan where John had earlier baptized [people], including Jesus himself. So some disciples of John were rather resentful of the great success of the things Jesus was doing and of his fame, growing daily brighter and dimming the glory of John, whom they regarded very highly. They reported to him in his prison everything that Jesus was saying and doing. So in order to mend this feeling of his disciples, John summoned two of them and sent them to Jesus to inquire of him, 'Are you not the one who was said to be coming, or should we be looking for another?' John had already witnessed many times about Christ, by often pointing his finger towards him and saying, 'Behold, the Lamb of God;[36] behold, the one who takes away the sin of the world.' Nothing would be more foolish than to suppose that so great a prophet, now close to death, had begun to doubt. For his witness about Christ was not in chains, nor did the prison's darkness dim his judgment about Christ. He recognized in prison the one he had recognized in the womb.[37] But this excellent man judged it best to pass on his disciples to Jesus by this method, as if putting them directly into his hands.

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34 The allusion to excommunication and (public) reconciliation is picked up from the explanation in the paraphrase at 27. For the example of one as a deterrent to the many, see the paraphrase on Acts 5:5 CWE 50 39–40 with n14 there.

35 'Regarded' here is *respexit*, the same word Mary used in the Vulgate version of the Magnificat 1:48, though in the Gospel text of 7:16 the word is *visitavit* 'visited,' as in Zechariah's song at 1:68. Cf chapter 1 nn92 and 117.

36 For the 'Lamb of God,' see John 1:29 and 36. The Baptist recognizes Jesus when both are still in the womb: 1:41–2 and the paraphrase, 48–50. For 'by often pointing his finger' (*digito demonstrando*), see n45.

37 The idea that the disciples of the Baptist report Jesus' activities out of envy or resentment at their teacher's being upstaged and that John, in the manner of a skilful teacher, does not directly oppose their feelings but arranges for them to learn from their own experience, is found in Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 36 (37) PG 57 413, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 71C–73B, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 612A–D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 419A–C quoting Jerome, the *Gloss* (on

So when his disciples relayed word for word what John had instructed them to say, the Lord Jesus did not answer them immediately. But after he had done quite a few miracles in their presence, driving out many diseases and incurable ills, removing unclean spirits with a word, restoring sight to many blind people, at last he gave them an answer. 'What is the point of my making a statement about who I am? No evidence is more certain than that of actions.[38] Go report to John what you have seen with your eyes, what you have heard with your ears: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead live again, the poor and lowly embrace the good news of salvation, according to Isaiah's prophecy, which says, "He sent me to preach good news to the poor." John preached that the kingdom of God is at hand.[39] You yourselves, ponder whether the things you have seen are worthy of the kingdom of heaven. But blessed is

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7:19 and 22), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 785A–D, and the *Catena aurea* (on 7:18–22), which omits any suggestion of John's disciples being resentful. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1746C–1748C addresses the problem of John's apparent doubt of Jesus' identity as the promised one, only to dismiss it in favour of an allegorical interpretation along with dismissal of claims that the Baptist did not believe that Jesus would experience death. Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 36 (37) PG 57 415 thinks it risible to imagine that the Baptist wondered if he were to preach the coming of Christ to the dead. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 785B rejects the possibility that John is doubtful, as does Hugh of St Cher (on 7:20) 173r, citing Chrysostom. Pseudo-Augustine *Quaestiones veteris et novi testamenti* PL 35 2394 also refers dismissively to those who think that John had doubts about Jesus, while asserting John's effective method of getting his disciples to learn for themselves. Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 6 PL 76 1095C–1096B, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 419B, thinks that the Baptist wonders whether he is to be Jesus' forerunner also in preaching to the dead; in his *Hom in Ezech* 1 PL 76 788D Gregory puts John's supposed issue more broadly: is the Redeemer also obliged to open the confines of the underworld? The *Gloss* (on 7:19) quotes Gregory and Bede.

38 The evidentiary superiority of actions over words, a rhetorical commonplace, is pointed out here by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1746C, quoted by the *Gloss* (on 7:22), and implied by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PL 123 785B and Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:18).

39 Matt 11:5 and Luke 7:22 have identical speeches for Jesus here. Erasmus makes only modest alterations to the Vulgate Latin of Jesus' words, which are compounded from the prophecies in Isa 26:19, 29:18, and 61:1. Cf 4:18–19 and its paraphrase at 142–7. The changes are *visum recipiunt* 'receive their sight' instead of *vident* 'see,' *reviviscunt* 'live again' instead of *resurgunt* 'rise again,' and *amplectuntur laetum salutis nuntium* 'embrace the good news of salvation' instead of *evangelizantur* 'are evangelized.' He does use *evangelizare* 'preach good news,' the Latinized version of the Greek word in quoting the LXX text of

the person who does not turn what I am doing for the salvation of humankind into an occasion of offence for himself. For as the greatness of my deeds will arouse resentment in some, so the weakness of my body will be offensive to some.' In this remark Jesus silently rebuked the resentment of John's disciples, while at the same time hinting that the scandal of the cross,[40] by which the mystery of the kingdom of heaven would be chiefly accomplished, would make many hostile to the gospel teaching; on the other hand, happy would those be who neither resented his glory nor recoiled from his salutary teaching because they were troubled by the disgrace of his death.

But when John's disciples had left to carry Jesus' answer to him, the Lord began to declare John's praises to the crowd so that they would not suppose, from his disciples' questions, that John himself was wavering and was now in some uncertainty about the witness that he had given about Jesus earlier. Thus Jesus deflected suspicion of inconstancy from John and added confidence and weight to John's witness about himself, extolling John's extraordinary virtues without, however, crediting him with the title Messiah, a title that some people had been trying to ascribe to him for quite a while. He spoke in this way:

'If you suppose that John, who earlier gave witness about me, is wavering in mind, then why ever did you leave the cities and run to desert places for a sight of the man? Was it to see a reed that is stirred by the wind and does not stand steady?[41] Well then, but what did you go out to see? Surely

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Isa 61:1 along with the Baptist's words from Matt 3:2. Cf the paraphrase on the Matthew passage CWE 45 183.

40 'Scandal of the cross' is *ignominia crucis* here, but see the Vulgate text of 1 Cor 1:23 and Gal 5:11, in both of which *scandalum* Latinizes σκάνδαλον. The Latin *ignominia* 'shame, disgrace, scandal,' is not uncommon in biblical Latin, eg in the regulations of Leviticus 18–20 and in the minor prophets, where it usually means 'uncovered nakedness,' literally or figuratively. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1749B, cited by the *Catena aurea* (on 7:23) notes that 'the cross could bring scandal [*scandalum*] even to the elect, but there is no witness greater than this to divine personhood, nothing that seems more beyond the human than that one individual has offered himself for the whole world.' Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 6 PL 76 1096A–B similarly quotes 1 Cor 1:23 and discusses the *scandalum*; he is quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 419D and both are followed by the *Gloss* (on 7:22–3) and Hugh of St Cher (on 7:23) 173r.

41 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1749C–1750D says that Jesus' questions and comments here and below are intended to call ordinary people to virtue and to a readiness to exchange, as John has done, the only thing they possess, life on earth, for immortality. John is a model of this, not a reed wavering in the wind of popular acclaim. Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 37 (38) PG 57 419 says

not a man dressed in soft garments, so that he could be corrupted by luxuries or self-seeking? Such suspicion does not fall on a man who was clothed in camel hide, who bound his loins with a leather belt, who lived on locusts and plain water, and who, living on such fare, still fasted often. Those who take pleasure in fancy clothing, those who are fond of extravagant dishes, are chasing after the courts of kings. Perhaps a suspicion of corrupted opinion, inconstancy, or flattery can fall on people who reach for such things. But John preferred the desert to princely courts, and camel hide to silken and golden and bejeweled garments. Besides, his prison itself shouts clearly enough how little he knows how to flatter. So there is no reason for anyone to suspect that the man earlier gave witness about me in order to win someone's favour and now has changed his opinion.[42]

'But I would still like to know what called you out into the desert. Was it to see a prophet? Indeed, he admitted that he was not the Messiah.[43] But I assure you, if you ran into the desert to see a prophet, you were not frustrated in your expectation. You certainly did see a prophet and even more than a prophet. He is the very one about whom Isaiah once prophesied that there would be a forerunner of the Messiah: "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, to prepare your road before you."[44] The prophets certainly

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the people had some foolish ideas about the Baptist's possible wavering, so Jesus, understanding why John had asked, now removes their suspicions and strengthens their weakness; he is followed by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 788B, who also notes that Jesus speaks in defence of John and against popular suspicion. The Latin tradition makes similar observations: Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 73B, Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 6 PL 76 1096C–D, both quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 419D–420D; the interlinear and marginal *Glosses* (on 7:24), and Hugh of St Cher (on 7:24) 173R–V.

Erasmus' 'leave the cities' echoes Chrysostom's 'leaving your cities and homes,' a paraphrase on Matt 11:7, the parallel to verse 24.

42 The contrast implied in 7:25 between the corrupting influence of life at a worldly court and the austere simplicity of the Baptist's life, including his unwillingness to curry favour with Herod, is much drawn out by the commentators. See Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1750D–1751B, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 37 (38) PG 57 420, Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* PL 76 1097A–B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 420D–421A, the interlinear *Gloss* (on 7:25), Hugh of St Cher (on 7:25) 173V, and the *Catena aurea* (on 7:25).

43 See 3:15–16, with Matt 3:11–12, Mark 1:7–8, and John 1:20 and 3:28.

44 Luke's quotation here, reproduced by Erasmus, is actually the version found in the Vulgate of Mal 3:1, a text influenced by God's command at Exod 23:20 'I shall send my messenger' (Vulg *angelum*) and altered in Mark 1:2 from Malachi's 'before my face' to 'before your face' and 'prepare your road before you.'

prophesied future events in riddling statements; this man pointed his finger towards the new arrival.[45] So those who think highly of John think correctly. For I assure you of this: among all those born of women in this age or earlier ones, no greater prophet has arisen than John. What I ascribe to him is quite great indeed. But what some people ascribe to him not even he acknowledges. For while there is one greater in power and honour than he, even so, in the people's thinking, that person is less than John in the kingdom of God. They marvel at John's austerity and solitude, they think little of this other one's outgoing nature. They look up to John's high position, they resent the other one's glory. They have embraced John's teaching, they cast aspersions on the other one's teaching.[46] John preached baptism for penitence because the kingdom of heaven, he said, was at hand; and an unschooled and humble people heeded him, tax collectors heeded him, soldiers and prostitutes heeded him, hastening to his baptism, confessing that they were sinners, and desiring to be washed clean of their sins. In this way they illuminated God's righteousness in acknowledging their own unrighteousness, since no one is free from wrongdoing except God alone, and in embracing God's goodness,

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45 Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 617B–C notes that the Baptist not only foretold the coming of Jesus but 'indicated him' (ὑπέδειξεν) by saying 'behold' (ἴδε), though the 'indication' could as well be gestural as verbal.
'Pointed his finger' is *digito demonstravit*, a common expression in classical Latin and the same phrase Erasmus had used in the paraphrase on John 1:29 CWE 46 30, as well as 215 with n36, in the paraphrase on 7:19. The gesture may be a deduction from the account in John 1:29–36, where the Baptist twice says, 'Behold, the Lamb of God' (*ecce agnus Dei*), or from Erasmus' acquaintance with pictorial representations of the Baptist, where the gesture is a commonplace, eg in work by Masaccio, Joan Mates, Carlo Crivelli, Andrea Mantegno, and various anonymous artists.

46 In paraphrasing verse 28 Erasmus ignores the view of Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1751D–1752A and Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 73D–74A, echoed in the interlinear *Gloss* (on 7:28), that the statement that no one among men born of women is greater than John implies his inferiority to Jesus, who was not born of a woman in the usual way but of a virgin; cf chapter 2 80 with n38. He also removes himself from a discussion held by some about whether Jesus speaks of the prophets and holy ones of the past only, or whether John's superiority is to those of his own day as well, or even whether the kingdom of heaven is coextensive with the church of John's day; see Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 421A–B, followed by the *Gloss* (on 7:28). Hugh of St Cher (on 7:28) 173r–174r says that John is not surpassed by any holy man of his own or preceding times. The *Catena aurea* (on 7:28) summarizes Bede. The comparison here between John's harsh manner and the open and friendly behaviour of Jesus anticipates the treatment of verses 33–4 below.

for he has promised to all who flee to him in genuine faith that he will forgive all the misdeeds of their earlier life.[47]

'The Pharisees, scribes, and lawyers, on the other hand, while they were embarrassed to acknowledge their own iniquity, preferred to make God out to be a liar rather than embrace the truth. And therefore they did not deign to be baptized by John, to their own ruin,[48] rejecting the kindly intention of God, who had decided to wipe out the sins of mortals in this very easy way. For what is easier than to confess and be dipped? Not that innocence is bestowed through John, but because his baptism and preaching prepared them for innocence, so that more might be guided on to salvation by the preaching of the one whose forerunner John was, if he found their

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47 Like Erasmus, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1753D–1755A specifies in even more detail than Luke what classes of people came to the baptism of John; he adds that the parallel in Matt 11:19b obscures these classes by simply saying 'sons.' For textual and theological issues see the paraphrase on that passage in CWE 45 187 with n29. Ambrose explains that God is shown as righteous by those who confess their sins even in John's baptism because they accept the righteousness after confession promised in eg Isa 43:26 and Ps 51:6. He is followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 421C–D, the *Gloss* (on 7:29), Hugh of St Cher (on 7:29) 174r citing Bede, and the *Catena aurea* (on 7:29).
An issue reported by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 423A–B is whether verses 29–30 (paraphrased from 'John preached' through 'John's preaching or mine') is part of Jesus' own words or a comment by Luke. If Jesus is the speaker, then he describes the people as hearing John and justifying God in accepting John's baptism. If Luke is the speaker, he is saying that the people, on hearing the Lord commending John, justified God. RSV and Fitzmyer AB Luke 670 and 675–6 both treat verses 29–30 as an interruption by Luke in Jesus' speech. The *Gloss* (on 7:29), Hugh of St Cher (on 7:29) 174r, and the *Catena aurea* (on 7:30) also note Bede's two possibilities. Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:29) says, 'From the fact that they heard Christ so excellently commending John, they began to praise and glorify God as just and glorious because they had been baptized and called to penitence by so great a one [ie John], and thereby the confutation of the Pharisees is plain.' Erasmus did not discuss the identity of the speaker in his *Annotations*. The closing words of this section, 'John's preaching or mine' 221 below and the opening of the next 'Jesus added a comparison' are evidence that he understands Jesus as the speaker throughout.

48 'To their own ruin' is *in suam ipsorum ruinam*, paraphrasing *in semetipsos* 'towards' or 'against themselves.' Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 421D, followed by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 7:30) and the *Catena aurea* (on 7:30), explains that the phrase means 'against themselves,' and that to reject God's grace is to act against oneself. Erasmus does not repeat the metaphor *respuere* 'spit out' used by Bede and emphasized in the interlinear *Gloss* to describe the Pharisees' behaviour.

hearts already prepared.[49] None of this was done recklessly, but God's foresight arranged everything for the salvation of the human race. And simple people embraced God's generosity, humble folk and sinners, who seemed to be quite alien to true godliness and far removed from knowledge of the Law. Those again who ought to have understood these promises particularly from the predictions of the prophets, and who seemed to be pillars of religion, rejected the kindness God offered them, not goaded to repentance by either John's preaching or mine.'

Reproaching them for this stubborn malice, Jesus added a comparison of the following kind: 'So what shall I say of the people of this wicked generation,[50] or to what shall I liken them? They are like the children we see sitting together in the marketplace, who say in their game, answering each other in turn, "We piped happy tunes for you on our flutes, and you were not roused to dance"; "we sang sad songs to you, and you did not weep."' The Lord Jesus applied this proverb taken from the marketplace to the stubborn Jews who were neither challenged to fear of divine punishment by John's austerity nor roused to love by Christ's friendliness and kindness.[51] 'For John the Baptist,' he said, 'came in unparalleled austerity of life preaching penitence and presenting a model of penitence, neither eating bread nor drinking wine, living in the desert, dressed in camel hide, belted with a leather strap. You were so unmoved to repentance by these things that you turned what was done for your betterment into an insult, saying, "He lacks good sense, he has a demon." The Son of Man came, drawing you to salvation by a different method, open to the approaches of everyone, displaying no strange austerity

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49 John's baptism in water as preparatory for the mightier baptism in Spirit was already a theme of 3:16; see its paraphrase 112. Hugh of St Cher (on 7:29) 174r makes a similar point in his discussion of Jesus' words here. Cf John 1:26–7 and Acts 13:23–5.

50 'This wicked generation' (*huius perversae generationis*). In adding *perversae* 'wicked, perverse' to *generationis*, Erasmus uses a Vulgate expression found also at 9:41 and Deut 32:5, Matt 17:17, Phil 2:15.

51 The tradition agrees in seeing the two groups of children as representatives of two kinds of appeal, stern austerity and friendly fellowship, ie John's and Jesus' methods; see Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 75A–76A, Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.11 PL 35 1337, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 620B–621D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 422D quoting Augustine, the marginal and interlinear *Glosses* (on 7:31), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 792A–B, Hugh of St Cher (on 7:32) 174v, and summaries of Cyril and Augustine in the *Catena aurea* (on 7:32). Most of these also point out that the comparison is addressed to the Jews in general or to those not persuaded to join in either side of the game.

and not threatening punishment but luring everyone to love by his good deeds, eating and drinking as others do, spending time with whomever he pleased, and no different from other people in his food or his dress. And his courteous behaviour, which ought to have roused you to better things, you turned into an opportunity for insult, saying, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners."[52]

'Yet mortal wickedness has made no headway against the plan of divine wisdom. For the righteousness of God has been illuminated in this way among all his children who are devoted to gospel wisdom, after it was established that nothing had been omitted for the salvation of all humankind, but that through their own fault the wicked and the proud, spurning God's gift, have been rejected and condemned, while tax collectors, prostitutes, sinners, and gentiles have been admitted by right to fellowship in salvation. So it had been predicted to be, and it has happened; so it was right to happen, and it has happened. Those who boasted that they were godly and righteous have been divorced from the gift of gospel salvation because of their unbelief. On the other hand, those who, however irreligious, however disgusting, however stained with sins they may be, have burst in upon the Lord through belief and genuine feeling, have been admitted into the fellowship of the heavenly kingdom.'[53]

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52 'Courteous behaviour' is *civilitas*, a term in Erasmus' vocabulary for the capacity to get along easily and attractively in the company of others. Cf his handbook *De civilitate* (1530) CWE 25 269–89; also the notable references in this paraphrase to the boy Jesus' attractive deportment in his growing years, chapter 2 90–1, 93–4, and 96–9.
'Glutton' and 'drunkard' are *vora*x and *vini potor*, replacing the late Latin and Vulgate *devorator* and *bibens vinum* 'drinking wine.' *Vorax* is a classical word, 'devouring, ravenous'; see the examples from Cicero and others in L&S at *vorax*. *Vini potor* is a more literal translation of the Greek οἰνοπότης 'a winedrinker.' In the annotations *devorator* and *bibens vinum* (on 7:34) Erasmus had suggested *edax* (rather than *vorax*) for the first of these, and *vini potor* because it is a term of insult, as is the Greek word.

53 For bursting into the kingdom of heaven, see chapter 2 n50. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1752A–1754C, in the discussion of 7:28, has an extended exposition of this virtuous violence; Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 37 (38) PG 57 422 also notes that Matt 11:12 refers to the violence of eagerness, not opposition. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 424A says that one interpretation of verse 35 is that the righteousness of God's plan and teaching for all is verified by those faithful to him, thus pointing to the humble people specified in verse 29, who acknowledged their sins and accepted John's baptism, and their Christian successors; the idea is repeated in a much compressed form by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 7:35) and more fully by Hugh of St Cher (on 7:35) 174v.

And look, something followed in which what actually happened put before their eyes what the Lord had taught in words about repelling the self-righteous and welcoming sinners.[54] The Pharisees, more than any others, were swollen with pride because of their knowledge of the Law and their reputation for holiness. One of them invited the Lord to take dinner at his house. And Jesus did not think it beneath him to do so, for he refused no one access to himself. But when he entered the man's house and was already at table, look, a woman who was a well-known sinner in that town realized that Jesus the merciful, who drove no one away from himself, who very readily healed all the ills of everyone, was present. Being already completely dissatisfied with herself but having formed a great trust in Jesus' kindness, she burst into the Pharisee's house. Her heart's passion had cast off all shame, though she was well aware of the great disdain with which the class of Pharisees generally avoids sinners, although the Pharisees themselves are steeped in greater faults within.[55] Furthermore she brought with her her fancy things, remind-

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54 'What actually happened' (*res ipsa*); 'in words' (*verbis*). *Res* 'action, deed, fact, material' is the regular Latin word paired with *verba* 'words'; cf Erasmus' frequent use of it in the variants on *Adagia* III iv 49 *Res ipsa loquitur* 'The facts speak for themselves' and the title of his writing handbook *De duplici copia verborum ac rerum* (*De copia* CWE 24). Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 423B here draws attention to the pairing of words and deeds, what was just said and what now happens. Cf n38.

55 The identity of the woman or women who anointed Jesus during his ministry is an old problem. The four accounts are found here at 7:37–50 and in Matt 26:6–13, Mark 14:3–9, and John 12:1–8 (where the woman is identified as Mary the sister of Lazarus). For consideration of the identities of the women strictly from a biblical perspective, see Fitzmyer AB Luke 684–8 and *The Gospel According to John* ed and trans Raymond E. Brown, The Anchor Bible 29 (New York 1966) 449–52.

Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1758D says that the women in Matthew and Luke are not the same person. Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 80 (81) PG 58 723–4 thinks that the synoptic versions all concern the same woman, a πόρνη 'prostitute,' and John's version is someone else. Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 199A says that the woman in Matthew cannot be the woman of Luke's account, whom Jerome calls a prostitute (*meretrix*); he seems to think that Matthew and John are giving versions of a single event. Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.79 PL 34 1154–5 says that Matthew, Mark, and John are in agreement and that Luke does not disagree, for Mary the sister of Lazarus anointed Jesus twice, first for remission of her sins and then for joy in her salvation. Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 621D–624A does not discuss the problem, only saying that the woman had been unrestrained in her former life. Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 33 PL 76 1240A–C says the four accounts concern the same woman and then goes on (1259C) to say she was Mary Magdalene (named in Luke 8:2 and in the accounts

ers of the former life that she hated. She meant to pour out onto Christ, for love of whom she burned, all the things with which she had earlier wickedly pleased herself and the world. She brought a fancy perfume bottle, which because of the slick surface that prevents its being grasped is called alabaster. And the perfume was best quality and bought at a high price.[56] For long ago those who were enslaved by the pleasures of the flesh took delight in expen-

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of Jesus' death and burial and of the finding of the empty tomb in all four Gospels). The identification of all four as one person who is also Mary Magdalene is accepted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 423C–D, followed by the *Gloss* (on 7:37), which does not refer to the Magdalene; Hugh of St Cher (on 7:36) 174V–175R, who describes her as a foolish woman devoted to destroying foolish young men; and the account of St Mary Magdalene in Jacobus de Voragine *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints* ed W.G. Ryan (Princeton 1993) 374–83, no 96. The *Catena aurea* (on 7:50) reprises Ambrose, Gregory, and Augustine. Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:46) refers the reader to his discussion on John 12 (a mistake for John 11), which he wrote earlier than his commentary on Luke; in his remarks on John 11:1–2 he reviews the positions of Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, and Gregory and concludes that church custom is to follow Gregory. On the other hand, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 793A–C does not mention the Magdalene and thinks that Luke's woman is distinct from the woman mentioned in Matthew and Mark, and from the sister of Lazarus.

Erasmus does not engage with this discussion here or in any of the parallel Gospel paraphrases; see CWE 45 343–4, CWE 46 149–50, and CWE 49 157–9. Later in this paraphrase he will call Mary Magdalene the sister of Lazarus, on 24:10 CWE 48 229 with n11. For his interest in contemporary debate on the question, see Epp 766, 936, and 1030.

The tradition is not necessarily that the woman is a prostitute in order to earn a living (for which see Erasmus' 1523 colloquy *Adolescentis et scorti* 'The Young Man and the Harlot' CWE 39 383 12–13 and 385 9–10), but that she is very rich and self-indulgent, doubtless including in sexual matters, and completely devoted to the worldly extravagances typical of women. In discussing either the narrative of 7:37–8 or the rebuke of 7:44–6, writers following Bede and Gregory the Great cite the particulars of her behaviour previously misused and now turned to repentance: passionate kisses, perfume and its expensive container to make her flesh more attractive, hair elaborately dressed to set off her face, and the provocative glances of her eyes. Hugh of St Cher (on 7:36–7) 174R–175R buttresses his comments in this regard with a handful of biblical quotations on female conduct: Prov 7:8–13, 1 Tim 2:9, 1 Pet 3:3. Erasmus will treat the same aspects below.

56 'Perfume' is *unguentum*, usually translated 'ointment' in older English, because ancient perfumes were oil based, not alcohol based. The value of the perfume is noted in the other three Gospels, not in Luke; see the passages cited in the preceding note. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 423C quotes part of a description of alabaster and its use in perfume containers from Pliny *Naturalis historia* 36.12.

diture on perfumes, especially at dinner parties. See the holy audacity of this sinner; she not only dared to enter the Pharisee's house uninvited but she even pressed herself, decked out as she was, on his dinner party.

But the dining-room couches prevented her from throwing herself publicly at Jesus' feet.[57] So she stood behind him and began to do what she could, drenching his feet with her tears, wholesomely disfiguring her eyes, which to her shame she formerly used to paint with makeup; and she dried the feet washed in the rain of her tears not with a towel but with the hair of her own head, hair that earlier she used to perfume, colour, comb, and interweave with gold for the pleasure of the flesh.[58] And the sinner's amazing love, not content with these things, planted kisses on Jesus' washed and dried feet, turning all the tools of her formerly dishonourable pleasure into

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Erasmus gives an etymology here for 'alabaster,' from the Greek privative prefix ἀ-, meaning 'not' and the root λαβ- from the verb λαβεῖν 'take, grasp,' as in his annotation *alabastrum* (on Matt 26:7), for which the editor of ASD VI-5 321 has no source to cite. Erasmus may have deduced this plausible etymology on his own. For his mention in the next sentence of perfumes at dinner parties in antiquity, see eg Catullus 13, Horace *Odes* 2.3.13 and 2.7.23, Juvenal *Satires* 6.303, Suetonius *Nero* 31.2 (an extreme example).

57 *lecti triclinii* 'dining-room couches' identifies the seating arrangements as the typical couches on which Romans and Greeks reclined at formal dinners, with their upper bodies close to the serving table on three sides and the fourth side open for the convenience of the servers; Erasmus implies that this arrangement explains why the woman is said to stand behind Jesus near his feet, as he had suggested in the annotation *lachrymis coepit rigare* (on 7:38). Cf Fitzmyer AB Luke 688 note on 7:36 and 689 note on 7:38.

58 The woman's eye 'makeup' is *stibium*, a powder or sulfite of antimony, mentioned by Pliny *Naturalis historia* and Celsus *De medicina* as an ingredient in preparations for disorders of the eye; it is or was also an ingredient of kohl, the Middle-Eastern cosmetic used as an eye makeup. For the use of *stibium* in biblical times, see 2 (Vulg 4) Kings 9:30, where another rich and self-indulgent woman, Jezebel, 'painted her eyes and adorned her head' (RSV) (Vulg *depinxit oculos suos stibio et ornavit caput suum*). 'Interweave with gold' (*auro intertexere*) seems to be Erasmus' own addition, used earlier in his paraphrase on 1 Tim 2:19 CWE 44 16 with n22, and possibly echoing a phrase describing fabric, not hair, in Virgil *Aeneid* 8.167 *chlamydemque auro dedit intertextam* 'and he gave a robe interwoven with gold.' Erasmus may also have been influenced by his own observation of social realities and representations, numerous in his day, of the fair-haired Magdalene in her preconversion finery by such painters as Hans Memling, Rogier van der Weiden, Lucas van Leyden, Antonio da Correggio, and anonymous others.

service to him who alone is to be loved.[59] You have the portrait of a sinner bursting into the kingdom of heaven by way of the shamelessness of her passion and the persistence of her faith.

Now on the other side take in a model of the Jew who through arrogance and unbelief makes himself unworthy of the kindness of God that is offered to him. The Pharisee who had invited Jesus to the dinner party saw these things. Though he should have been supportive of the woman who had pushed her way in because of so much feeling, humbling herself with so much modesty, giving witness in so many proofs of her penitence for her former life; though he should have loved the gentleness of Jesus, who never drives any person away from himself, the Pharisee was provoked to insult them both. For this is what he thought to himself: 'If this man were a prophet as he is held to be, he would surely not be unaware of who and what the woman is who is touching him. For she is a public sinner of known unchastity. And if he did know, he would not allow himself to be soiled by the touch of her defiled body.' For the Pharisee was of the opinion that holy people were defiled if they had even had conversation with a sinner. Such was the arrogance of the false righteousness with which the Jews pleased themselves and displeased God.[60]

But in order to make plain by more definite proof that he was a prophet, Jesus answered the Pharisee's inner thought. 'Simon,' he said, 'I have something to say to you.' Simon replied, 'Speak, teacher.' So as not to betray Simon's impious thoughts to the rest of the guests (for men of the gospel ought always to be concerned for courteous behaviour), once Jesus had Simon's attention he put a parable to him as follows:[61] 'There were two men

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59 Erasmus here omits any paraphrase on the last part of verse 38, 'and anointed them [Jesus' feet] with the ointment' (RSV). He will, however, bring that action into the paraphrases on verses 44 and 46.

60 That the Pharisee's private reaction wronged both the woman and Jesus (and even himself, in thinking his position was a righteous one) is noted by Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 33 PL 76 1240B–1241A, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 424D–425A and summarized by the interlinear *Gloss* (on 7:39). The same passage in Gregory introduces the metaphor of a doctor for Jesus in this episode, repeated in the interlinear *Gloss* and used by Erasmus in the paraphrase on verse 44. Gregory also says (1240D) that Simon thought he would be stained by another person's sin.

61 That Jesus' knowledge of the unspoken thoughts of the Pharisee proves he is a prophet or more than a prophet is pointed out by Nicholas of Lyra (on 7:40). The 'false righteousness' (*falsa iustitia*) of the Pharisee (at the end of the preceding paragraph) is pointed out by Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 33 PL 76 1240C and 1242A, repeated by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 425D and the interlinear *Gloss*

in debt to the same moneylender; the one of them owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. But since neither was able to pay up, he forgave each one the whole of his debt. Which one of the two ought to love so generous a creditor more passionately?'[62] Not yet seeing where this parable was heading, Simon simply replied, 'In my view the one who was forgiven more ought to love more intensely.' Then revealing why he had told this parable, Jesus said to Simon, 'You have judged rightly, but now you are applying your judgment unfairly.'

Then he turned to the woman and spoke to Simon: 'Do you see this woman, whom you call a sinner? Do you see her overwhelmed with tears, her hair flying loose, being lavish with her perfume, lavish with her kisses, prostrate, in her whole posture presenting the picture of a penitent? These are proofs of an unbounded love for me. The more passionately she hates herself, the more earnestly she loves me. She came a sinner, but she was healed when she touched her doctor. You scorn her as a sinner and you take pride in yourself as a righteous man; but the devotion of this sinner far surpasses your righteousness. I came into your house an invited and requested guest, and you offered no water for my feet, which is after all the duty of ordinary courtesy. But she bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You did not offer me a kiss, which even an ordinary friend offers his friend. From the time she came in, out of her unrestrained emotion she did not stop kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head even with ordinary oil, a service ordinarily offered to all kinds of guests. She has completely covered my feet, that is, the least regarded part of me, with expensive perfume. Do not ponder

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(on 7:39). That Jesus does not betray to the rest of the guests the sins implicit in Simon's unspoken thoughts and thus models courteous behaviour (*civilitas*) for men of the gospel is paralleled in the injunctions of Gregory ibidem 1240D–1241A to have regard for a sinning neighbour and reprove the sin but love the neighbour, whose sins may have been or may someday be our own; Gregory is quoted by Bede ibidem 424D–425A. Cf n52, but also the paraphrase on John 4:8 CWE 46 54, where Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman at the well in privacy; the word translated there as 'courtesy' is *civilitas*.

62 'Moneylender' is *foenerator*; 'creditor' is *creditor*. In an annotation *cuidam foeneratori* (on 7:41) Erasmus had said that *creditor* would have been a better translation for the Greek δανειστής here, because as he had noted earlier (cf chapter 6 n36), the Greek word means both a professional moneylender and a lender doing a service for a friend, which is the sort meant here. Whoever heard, he asks, that a *foenerator* forgave a loan? Edward Lee took issue with Erasmus' annotation but was brushed off; *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* Note 53 CWE 72 159–60. Here Erasmus uses both the familiar word from the Vulgate text and his own preferred translation.

how much she has sinned, but reflect on how much she loves. For charity covers a multitude of sins.[63]

'For I assure you of this, that her many sins have been remitted her, not because she fasted much, not because she prayed much, not because she kept the many regulations of the Pharisees, but because she loved much, because she wholeheartedly trusted in me. The more gravely she sinned, the more unhappy with herself she is, and the more passionately she loves me, by whose freely given mercy she was released from her sins. So the magnitude of her sins has turned out well for her. On the other hand, one to whom less is remitted loves less. You think yourselves righteous for observing the Law, and you think that you don't have much for God to forgive you, and therefore you love him rather coolly when he forgives you.'[64]

Having said all this to the Pharisee, the Lord turned to the woman and said, 'Your sins are remitted.' She had not made any prayer, she had not confessed anything in words, but she did confess more clearly in her actions, she did pray more effectively with her tears. This is the confession most welcome to Christ. By prayers of this kind is he most easily moved to mercy. Happy are the tears, happy the expenditure on perfume, happy the kisses that wrest these words from Jesus: 'Your sins are remitted.' For he does not forgive some and retain others but forgives them all at once, imputing nothing at all of a former life to the sincere penitent.[65]

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63 The rhetorical elaboration of the paired opposites in verses 44–6 depends in the first instance on the Gospel text and the obvious themes it offers; some touches also appear in parts of the exegetical tradition. For the reference to Jesus as the penitent's doctor, see Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 33 PL 76 1240B–C, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 424D. Hugh of St Cher (on 7:44 *moraliter*) 175V notes that in ancient times a kiss of peace was exchanged when guest and host met at the threshold and thus pledged each other a shared freedom from fear. That the feet are the least regarded part of the body is mentioned by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1759B; Hugh of St Cher (on 7:36) says kissing feet is a humiliation of the mouth. The closing sentence in this paragraph is a quotation of 1 Pet 4:8b.

64 'Rather coolly' is *frigidius*. Erasmus will use the same word at 229, of the Jews' response to Christ: 'embraced coolly.'

65 'Forgive [sin]' in the paraphrase on verses 42–9 is either *condonare* or *remittere* (the latter here translated 'remit'). The Vulgate Gospel text had used *donare* for the forgiveness of loans in verses 42–3 and then *remittere* and *dimittere* once each in verse 47, followed by *remittere* when Jesus addresses the woman in verse 48 and when the other guests question his action in verse 49. *Remittere* appears once more in the paraphrase on verse 50, where it means 'send,' at 'send her home.' For Erasmus' dissatisfaction with traditional ecclesiastical preference for *dimittere*, cf chapter 6 n40.

But now look with me at pharisaic sanctimony. True godliness rejoices in other people's gains just as it does its own. But the Pharisees who were at table together, begrudging the sinner Jesus' mercy, began to grumble, exchanging private comments among themselves, saying, 'Who is this man who takes so much on himself as to remit sins on his own authority, a thing that no one of the prophets or patriarchs until now has claimed for himself? Not even the priests claim any other rights for themselves than to pray for the sins of the people.'

Jesus, however, knowing their thoughts, and wanting to strengthen the woman's heart and send her home glad instead of grieving, said to her, 'Your trust in me has made you whole; go in peace.' The Pharisees had persuaded themselves that sins were forgiven by means of burnt offerings and ritual washing. And those things did indeed contain an image of sacred matters. Yet our Lord Jesus showed them that through gospel faith all sins are forgiven at one single time for those who repent.

And in the things we have described an image of both peoples, Jews and gentiles, is foreshadowed, the one of whom invited Christ to itself, calling out through many generations, 'Come, Lord; do not tarry.'[66] But when he came, they did not welcome him as they should have, relying on their false conviction of sanctity formed from their observance of the Law; and they objected loudly to others who wanted to embrace the salvation offered them. For while they were trying to establish their own righteousness by offering material things, they were not subject to the righteousness of God, which is freely given through faith. But the people of the gentiles, to whom Jesus had not come (since, besides their idol worship, they were given to every kind of sin and had no assurance based on the works of the Law, of which they knew nothing), when they learned about Jesus, burst in upon him, as it were. In simplicity of faith they earned remission of all their misdeeds, and in ardent enthusiasm they greeted with a kiss the gift of God that the Jews either spurned or embraced coolly. Yet in this woman a model of penitence

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66 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1758A–B, 1760A–B, 1761C suggests that the two debtors of verses 41–3 represent the Jews and the gentiles, and the woman sinner the church; he is followed by Hugh of St Cher (on 7:38–42 *mystice*) 175V. Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 199A says the woman (in Matthew) is an image of both the gentiles and the church. Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 33 PL 76 1242A has Simon represent the Jews and the woman the gentiles, that is, the church; he is quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 425D. The *Catena aurea* (on 7:50) reviews the allegorical possibilities.
'Come, Lord; do not tarry' (*veni, Domine*; *noli tardare*). See Pss 40:17 (Vulg 39:18b), 70:5 (Vulg 69:6b), and 79:3 (Vulg 80:3; quoted by Bede).

was put before everyone in general, that whoever has begun to be displeased with himself should not turn to Moses or the Pharisees or the philosophers but only hasten to Jesus. No one is more merciful than he, no one is more inclined to forgive. On him should [the penitent] pour out what he was earlier in the habit of wasting on unholy pleasures. Let him consecrate all his members, which earlier were in the service of filthy lusts, to obedience to Jesus. Jesus' touch will remove all sins. If it is not possible to touch his head, reach for his feet! No part of Jesus is so lowly that it will not heal sins. A woman who only touched the hem of his garment was healed of a flow of blood.[67] He permits whatever service is expended on one's neighbours, even the lowest, to be counted as done to him. He will acknowledge the good deed that is expended on his members. So let the sinner not consider how much wrong he has done, let him not count over the total of his good deeds, as if he is going to settle up with Jesus, as the Pharisees did. Only let him be dissatisfied with himself and rely wholeheartedly on Jesus. Let him begin to hate what he had wrongly loved and begin to love what he had sinfully disregarded. Faith will obtain from our most merciful Lord what merits could not hope for.

And here, most excellent Theophilus, consider the three characterizations at this dinner party: that of the sinner, that of the Pharisee, and that of the judge. The judge alone is truly pure of every stain of sin; rather, he is himself the wellspring of all purity. The sinner does nothing but weep, wash, dry, kiss, and perfume. You recognize the services of love towards one's neighbour. The Pharisee, swelling with pride in his Jewish righteousness, insults the kindness of his Saviour, turns up his nose at the sinner, and even resents her, though himself in bondage to worse evils. Such generally is the conviction of righteousness that comes from clothing, dietary restrictions, observance of a religious calendar, ritual washing of the body and the pots and pans, long-winded prayers, and like matters, which have the look of godliness among humans though gospel godliness does not reside in them. Those who trust in matters of this sort are in the habit of being foolishly pleased with themselves and of turning up their noses at their neighbour, and are resentful and insult Jesus' freely given kindness. What if that woman had touched the Pharisee? With what scorn would he have rejected her, with

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67 A parallel between this chapter's woman sinner and the woman with the flow of blood, who was hesitant but determined to reach Jesus in spite of her (ritual) uncleanness (8:43–8, Matt 9:20–2, Mark 5:25–34), and several other women also, is drawn by Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 80 (81) PG 58 723–4, a passage alluded to by Hugh of St Cher (on 7:37) 175r.

what washings would he have purified himself from her dirty touch?[68] So a miserable sinner is spurned by those who themselves are sick with malice, scorn, and the disease of insulting language, the more incurable because they do not think they are ill. For it often happens that people more quickly repent of notable and obvious flaws than of the kind that conceal themselves with the appearance of sanctity. You would turn an adulterer, a drunk, an idolater, a soldier to good intentions more quickly than a Pharisee, a jealous man, a smug man, a censorious man, a hypocrite. Now as the host is, so are the Pharisee guests: 'Who is this man,' they say, 'who remits sins?' But the judge who alone knew the hearts of everyone, who alone could claim for himself superiority in holiness, courteously corrects the Pharisee's arrogance and defends the sinner, absolves her when she confesses, and comforts her. Therefore it was going to be the task of a gospel pastor to shun the Pharisee's example and imitate the gentleness of Jesus in welcoming sinners.

Chapter 8

Furthermore, Jesus' kindness towards sinners no matter how humble was so great that he not only permitted this one woman to touch his feet but even took several women around with him along with his apostles, and allowed himself and the men with him to be supported by their generosity and service. For since Jesus, with the twelve disciples who accompanied him everywhere, continually changed location to sow the seed of gospel teaching more broadly and travelled on foot through various towns and villages, so that there would be no lack of ordinary necessities for these ceaseless wanderers intent on their single task, several women also accompanied Jesus, women whom he had either freed from unclean spirits or healed of illnesses.[1] Among them was Mary surnamed the Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had driven

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68 Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 33 PL 76 1240D says, 'If the woman had come to the Pharisee's feet, she would be pushed away with kicks and would leave.' Cf n60.

1 In LB VII 360C–D, the text of this somewhat awkward sentence has a period inserted after *uni negotio intentis* 'intent on their single task' and a new paragraph beginning at *comitabantur Jesum et mulieres aliquot* 'several women also accompanied Jesus.' But this break leaves the whole first part, introduced by the subordinating conjunction *cum* 'since,' without a main clause. In the lifetime editions the punctuation is only a comma between *intentis* and *comitabantur*, and the statement that several women also accompanied Jesus is the main clause of the sentence, as in the translation here.

seven demons;[2] there was Joanna besides, the wife of Chuza (who was Herod's procurator), turned from a lady of the court into a disciple of Christ, and Susanna, and quite a few others who, mindful of a benefit they had received, aided the gospel undertaking as they could, ministering to Jesus and his disciples from their resources.[3]

For Christ, poor himself, had chosen poor men as apostles, and supplies could not be everywhere provided for them since they were continually changing their location and travelling from one spot to another. And it was appropriate for that time that the beginnings of the gospel philosophy be broadcast by humble, lowly, and undistinguished persons.[4] Moreover, Paul, whose follower I was, preferred manual labour to living off another's means. Much more ought those who have sufficient personal means and who are

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2 Although Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 428D–429A, elaborating on Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 223A, here again identifies Mary Magdalene as the woman sinner in chapter 7, Erasmus again does not engage with the question. See chapter 7 n55. Bede's identification is followed by Hugh of St Cher (on 8:2) 176r–v. Nicholas of Lyra (on 8:2) considers the options and leaves the question open.

3 'Susanna' omitted from the list in the paraphrase until *1535*
'Ministering to Jesus and his disciples': Luke's text in Erasmus' day read only 'ministered *to him*' (*ei*, as seen eg in the Vulgate in the 1498 edition of the *Gloss* used here and in Erasmus' own 1527 NT, in both the Vulgate and Erasmus' improved Latin version) and the Greek equivalent αὐτῷ. That was still the reading of the Clementine edition, but modern texts read the plural, 'to them.' See Nestle-Aland on this verse; Fitzmyer AB Luke 695 and 698; and the next note.
Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 222C–223A says on the women observers at the crucifixion (Matt 27:54) that it was Jewish custom and not in ancient times considered blameworthy among them for women to provide food and clothing to teachers; but because the custom could be a cause of scandal among gentiles, Paul said that he had given it up (1 Cor 9:5–15); but these women ministered to the Lord from their resources so that he from whose spiritual wealth they had benefited might reap the benefit of their material wealth (alluding to 1 Cor 9:11) – not that he needed what they provided but to set a model for teachers, who ought to be content with the food and clothing provided by their pupils. Jerome is quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 429B–C, followed by the *Gloss* (on 8:3), restated by Hugh of St Cher (on 8:3) 176v in different words, cited in the *Catena aurea* (on 8:3), and summarized by Nicholas of Lyra (on 8:3).

4 The exegetical tradition at least from Bede treats the beginning of this chapter chiefly as prelude to the deliberate training of the twelve in their apostolic mission, specifically in the synoptics' reports of the parable of the sower (8:4–8; cf Matt 13:1–9, Mark 4:1–9) and Jesus' separate exposition of it (8:9–15; cf Matt 13:10–23, Mark 4:10–20). See Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 428B–D, followed by the *Gloss* (on 8:1–2), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 796D, and Hugh of St Cher (on 8:1) 176r.

fit for gospel preaching share freely what they have with their brothers. Yet he taught that it was fair for those who sow the heart's spiritual food to be relieved when necessary with assistance in material matters by those for whom they labour.[5] But in order that Christ might teach that such generosity should be not extorted but voluntary, he did accept some women[6] into his company, though only those following on their own initiative. He never summoned any woman to follow him, and is said not to have asked for anything from anyone, in order to embarrass the shamelessness of those who, though they do not labour for the gospel, in the gospel's name still extort from unwilling givers not just what is enough for necessity but more than enough for extravagant living. Yet a spontaneous contribution of good things will never fail one who is wholeheartedly devoted to the business of the gospel. More than that, while Jesus permitted some women to assist his gospel task, he still did not regularly permit either his mother or his brothers to obstruct the progress of the gospel.[7]

But one day, because of the increasing crowd, he had left his house and gone to the sea, and was sitting there on the shore teaching the people. Such a great multitude rushed up to hear him from the neighbouring towns all around that he was compelled by the throngs clustering around him to get into a boat. From there, as from a teacher's chair, he taught the crowd of all kinds of people,[8] saying much to them under cover of comparisons in

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5 Erasmus draws attention to Luke's relationship to Paul, based on the introduction of the narrator's voice at Acts 16:10; see also the words he puts into Luke's mouth in the paraphrase on the prologue to this Gospel, 20. The purpose seems to be to accommodate the Pauline attitude towards sources of support for clergy expressed in traditional exegesis on this passage, especially the allusion to 1 Cor 9:11 made by Erasmus in the preceding paragraph. See n3 and the paraphrase on 1 Cor 9:5–15 CWE 43 120–4.

6 'Some women.' *quaslibet* in the lifetime editions (the feminine form of this indefinite adjective); *quoslibet* in LB VII 361A (the masculine and generalizing form), 'some people'

7 While most of the Latin tradition speaks of the women's support only as a model for all believers who are in a position to support their Christian teachers, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 797A more emphatically calls attention to the fact that women are not excluded in spite of their natural weakness, and that they used their own wealth, not unjustly acquired funds, for such support. Erasmus' reference to Jesus' treatment of his mother and brothers anticipates 8:19 and its paraphrase.

8 Erasmus adds to the text of 8:4 Jesus' house (or lodging), his teaching on the shore, and his removal to a boat. All three appear in Matt 13:1–2, and the lakeshore location and boat also in Mark 4:1; both accounts are mentioned by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 430A. For the teacher's chair see 5:1–3 and its paraphrase,

order to awaken in them a passion for learning and so that what had been implanted as a puzzle would take root more deeply in their heart.[9]

So first he set before them a comparison to advise everyone to receive the gospel word with eager hearts and not to be satisfied to have heard it unless they applied what they had learned to the practice of godliness. 'A sower went out,' he said, 'to sow his seed. And while he left no place bare of seed, wanting a very abundant crop, the seeds were not received in equally fertile soil. For one handful fell next to the public road. It was partly trodden by travellers' feet and broken up; the rest, because it was not covered with earth, was eaten by the birds of the air. Another fell on rocky ground, and, being received by the thin layer of earth that covered the rock, it did sprout. But since there was no earth under it to supply moisture for proper growth, soon after springing up it withered in the heat of the sun and died in its first greening. Another again fell among thorns, and did sprout, but since the thorns sprang up at the same time and grew more quickly and spread themselves more thickly and [were] taller, it came to pass that the green growth of the good seed was choked, so that it was not able to come up into more open air. Yet not all fell unproductively. There was a part that fell on good ground and, once it sprouted, yielded a hundredfold crop.'

When the Lord had said this, he knew that what he had said was not understood by everyone. So, wanting them to remember the parable later on because it concerned the salvation of all, he cried out, saying, 'He who has ears able to hear gospel wisdom, let him hear the things I have said. For they do not call for a thick-witted or drowsy listener. They concern each and every one of you. There are some people who like statues have ears but do not hear because they are attuned to the petty regulations of the Pharisees but deaf to the teaching of true godliness.'[10]

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162–4 with n4. 'The sea' translates *lacus*, normally 'lake,' here and several times below, ie the so-called Sea of Galilee; see chapter 5 n2. In the paraphrases on 8:23 and 33 Erasmus replaces *stagnum* of the Gospel text with *lacus*; Nicholas of Lyra (on 8:22) comments that *mare* in Hebrew means not a saltwater body but a *stagnum* or *lacus*. (In verse 25 Erasmus uses *mare* 'sea'.)

9 That the meaning of the parable is hidden from ordinary hearers in order to provoke them to puzzle over it and thus learn it better is suggested by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 430D, followed by the *Gloss* (on 8:8), and explicitly stated by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 797C–D, who is quoted by the *Catena aurea* (on 8:4).
'Comparisons' are *similitudines*, a Latin word that Erasmus often uses instead of the Latinized Greek *parabola* 'parable,' which in Greek means 'comparison.'

10 For the allusion to statues that have ears but do not hear, see Pss 115 (Vulg 113):6 and 135 (Vulg 134):17.

But the disciples who were closest to Jesus asked him to explain the puzzle of the parable. To them he said, 'It is given to you, as to intimate friends, to know the mystery of the kingdom of God. The courts of kings have their secrets that are concealed from the common folk and from those hostile to the fellowship of the court. The gospel kingdom too has its secrets, not to be rashly offered to just anyone but to be presented so as to be visible only to those who are intimates of the court but to others under cover of parables, so that those who are not worthy, though seeing do not see, and though hearing do not understand.[11]

'However, this is the hidden meaning of the parable. The sower is the Son of Man; the soil is the human heart; the seed is the gospel word. It is not earthly seed but heavenly, and it does not come from a human being but from God and is therefore called the word of God.[12] The Son of Man leaves no place bare of this seed, but by Satan's wickedness and human fault fruitful growth occurs in few of them. For the seed that fell by the wayside symbolizes those who hear the word of God carelessly and drowsily, and soon, before it can take root in their hearts, the devil comes and hurls distracting thoughts at them, removing from their hearts what they heard – begrudging, that is, their salvation and with his godless suggestions blocking them from reaching salvation. For as the Son of Man leaves nothing undone to lead sinners to salvation, likewise the devil leaves nothing untried to drag as many as he can to destruction. He therefore flies down quickly after the seed of the gospel word has been sown and gathers it up before it can stick fast in the heart, so that having heard it soon makes no difference. Then the seed received in rocky ground signifies those who with joy receive the word they have heard and store it away in their hearts, so that like sprouted grain they show some hope of godliness in themselves by certain external signs. In truth, since what they heard is not deeply planted and has not driven roots, so to speak, into their innermost feelings, they obey the divine word for a

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11 This expansion of verse 10, focused on the comparison of the intimates of a worldly king to the chosen few, apostles or disciples, who can more nearly understand Jesus' hidden mysteries, maintains a theme already expressed in this *Paraphrase*: the differences and similarities between human kings and Jesus' kingship. See the paraphrases on 1:5; 2:1–2; 3:1–2, 14, 19; 4:5, 41; 7:25.

12 Already in the paraphrase on verse 5 above, where 'gospel word' translates *sermonem evangelicum*, and throughout the paraphrase on the parable's explanation, 8:11–18, and beyond into 8:21, 'word' is *sermo*. For Erasmus' preference for *sermo* over *verbum* as a translation of the 'word' of John 1:1, see chapter 1 n10. The Gospel text of 8:11–15 uses *verbum* three times and implies it in a pronoun once.

while but fail when a storm of ills arises, deserting their good beginnings. For it is easy to keep the gospel teaching when things are going well. But unless you drink deeply of the disposition of true godliness, when things go badly and the firmness of a gospel breast is most needed, then the temporary show of holiness vanishes.

'Now the seed that falls among thorns signifies those who after they have received the gospel word produce no fruit of true godliness from it, because the disposition towards a better life is choked and overrun by the cares of this world, the riches and pleasures of life here and now.[13] Then the seed sown on good ground signifies those who, their whole heart attentive and unencumbered, receive the salvific word and store it away once it is received in their memory and plant it deep in their innermost feelings, so that they cannot be moved by any assault of evils from the zeal for godliness they have once begun.'

And so Jesus deigned to explain this parable to his disciples privately, partly so that they themselves would learn to investigate with godly care the more abstruse meaning in other parables too; partly so that later they might in their proper time preach openly to all what they were then hearing privately from him. If indeed understanding of sacred teaching is light,[14] one who shares it with another does not share it so that it can be kept hidden but so that it may shine before many. 'No one,' he said, 'lights a lamp and covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed,[15] but instead puts it on a lampstand so that those who come into the house may see the light. For now nothing is

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13 The text of 8:14 says 'cares and riches and pleasures of life,' three items. Erasmus has instead two items: 'cares of this world,' followed by 'riches and pleasures of life here and now,' the text of the lifetime editions and LB. In a *1519* annotation *euntes suffocantur* (on 8:14) he had quoted the phrase as it appears in the Vulgate and Greek, with three items. The paraphrase version might be considered an oversight or an emphatic asyndeton (rare with only two items), but it is more likely to be an interpretive move, defining the cares of the world as riches and pleasures. Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 15 PL 76 1131C–1132A notes that no one would have believed him (Gregory) if he simply said that riches are the thorns of life; but in fact they are thorns that irritate the mind with their constant jabbing and even bloody it by inducing it to sin. Gregory is quoted at length by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 431D, summarized in the *Gloss* (on 8:14) and the *Catena aurea* (on 8:14). Cf also Matt 13:22 and Mark 4:18–19.

14 Cf Ps 119 (Vulg 118):105.

15 'Under a bed' (*sub lectum*). In an annotation *subtus lectum* (on 8:16) Erasmus had noted with approval the suggestion by Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 8:16) that *subtus* (an adverb) be changed to *subter* (a preposition). Here he uses the even commoner classical preposition *sub* 'under.'

being transmitted to you privately or under cover of parables that is not to be made clear later to the whole world; nor is anything now so dark and hidden from the understanding of the uneducated that in the course of time it is not to be uncovered through you and brought out for the knowledge of all.

'Therefore you must make sure again and again to implant what you are hearing very carefully into your hearts so that nothing slips out or is lost. Whoever takes in understanding of the mystic word eagerly and stores it away like a treasure in his heart declares himself worthy to have more entrusted to him, since what is given him he keeps with great care.[16] Indeed, to one who has, it shall be given, but as for one who by his own carelessness has lost what he had, not only shall nothing additional be given to him, but even the very thing that he seemed to have shall be taken from him, since he held onto his gospel treasure carelessly – and the richer you are in that, the richer you desire to be.' Concerning these matters our Lord Jesus put many other parables before the people, all of which he explained to his disciples separately.[17]

But that the Lord might make it clear how precious a thing the gospel teaching is and with how much care and concern it is to be both delivered and received, one day while Jesus was teaching the people, his mother and brothers happened to come, wanting to meet with him on some family matter. But there was no clear path to him because of the thick crowd in the way. So he was told that his mother and brothers were standing outside the door and wanted to meet with him. But in order to teach that the gospel word was a thing too precious to be decently interrupted for any human feelings or concern about domestic affairs, Jesus replied to those who had told him the news: 'My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it' – teaching that blood relationship is not to be acknowledged when the salvation of souls is in question.

In fact, the Lord even wanted to teach his followers by actual situations that in all the tumults in which this world is going to rise against the advance of the gospel, no one should either give up hope or trust in his own powers, but should depend on the aid of the Lord; and that the Lord's help will not

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16 For Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 433B–C the thing that is given or taken away in 8:18 is the word of God; Hugh of St Cher (on 8:16) 178r says it is the word of preaching, in which there are two parts, the spiritual sense and the historical sense, as there are two parts of a lamp, the light and the lamp from which it shines. Nicholas of Lyra (on 8:16) calls it the gospel teaching.

17 Jesus' practice of explaining the concealed meaning of parables to his disciples is noted at Matt 13:36, 51–2 and Mark 4:33–4, but not in Luke.

be lacking in any dangers if only faith does not desert us, if we implore his protection in prayers poured out from our heart. Therefore, one day it happened that when Jesus had taught the people all day long, he got into a boat with his disciples and told them to take him to the other shore, since night was falling.

Then during the crossing Jesus fell asleep, and at that point a windstorm arose and so roughened the sea that the disciples were in mortal danger from waves rushing into the boat. They went up to Jesus in fear and woke him, saying, 'Teacher, you are asleep and we are perishing!' So he got up and rebuked the wind and told the turbulent water to settle down. And the elements acknowledged their Lord. Soon at his bidding a great calm followed. Once that was done he turned to the disciples and scolded them for being so anxiously fearful even though he was with them, when they had heard so many times that nothing would stand in their way if only they kept hold on a firm and unbroken trust in him. 'Where was that trust of yours? Surely its failure aroused these tumults!'[18] Then those who were aboard the boat, seeing that the whole storm had rapidly grown calm at the sound of his rebuke and observing in him something more than human, were seized with fear and amazement, saying, 'Who is that man? For not only does he command spirits to depart, but he even gives orders to inanimate and unheeding elements, the sea and the winds, and they obey his instructions.'[19] Therefore, whenever we too happen to be in danger, whenever Jesus has fallen asleep in our hearts, let us tug at him with devout entreaties, let us rouse him with constant prayers, and instantly the storm will be turned to calm weather. Self-seeking is a bad wind; wrathfulness and hatred are a dangerous cyclone; evil desires are looming waves that will overturn the small craft that is our

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18 Luke DeWeese 'Erasmus of Rotterdam's Paraphrase of the Eighth Chapter of Luke' (master's thesis, University of Kentucky 2008) 29 with n70 observes that the Latin text leaves it uncertain whether this sentence ('Surely . . . tumults') is to be attributed to Jesus or to Erasmus' Luke-voice.

19 That the purpose of Jesus' crossing the lake in stormy weather was to instruct and strengthen the disciples in faith is noted by Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 28 (29) PG 57 349–51 and Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 632D–633A. Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 55C believes that only the sailors and other passengers, not the disciples, were truly amazed at Jesus' powers, but admits that the disciples were mere men too who had not yet learned the Saviour's might; he is followed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 435D–436B, the *Gloss* (on 8:25), and Hugh of St Cher (on 8:25) 179r.

mind; but the Lord must be awakened to govern these disturbances, and the storm will cease.[20]

So once calm had been restored, they sailed on to the land of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee and is a part of lower Arabia.[21] And when he stepped out onto land, he was met by a man who for a long time now had been in bondage to a very savage demon, to such a point that he could not be clothed nor kept at home by any means of restraint; instead he wandered among the tombs of the dead and often leaped out at passersby.[22] When he ran out at the noise of the strangers landing, to his good fortune he saw Jesus. For Jesus, taking pity on the man, directed the godless spirit to come out of the man. Instantly the sufferer fell at Jesus' knees. Surely some hidden force of divine power had drawn him there. But the unclean spirit shouted out through the poor wretch's mouth, 'What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech you, do not torment me!' For the Lord's bidding was pressing it to leave the man it had long harassed. It used to seize the man often and torment him in pitiable ways, with such savagery that all his fetters, chains, and bonds would be broken and he would be driven by the demon through desert places. So that spirit reluctantly left his longstanding possession; in fact, it even feared that the day was now at hand when the demons were going to be committed to eternal punishment, to pay the penalty for all the evils with which they afflict humankind here on earth.[23] Not penitence for misdeeds had wrested these prayers from it, but fear of punishment.

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20 For the 'small craft' (*cymba*) cf chapter 5 n3.
The exegetes just cited in n19 generally see the moral of this incident as applying to ordinary humans, clerical and lay, trying to navigate the storms of life; the *Gloss* says that we must beware lest Jesus drowse and sleep in our bodies' rest.

21 The uncertainty about the exact name – Gargasi / Gergesi, Gerasa, or Gadara – is already seen in Jerome *De locis Hebraicis* PL 23 889C and 903B, partly quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 436D–437A, followed by the *Gloss* (on 8:26) and Hugh of St Cher (on 8:26) 179V. Erasmus gives a generalized and abbreviated version of the location and does not discuss the name, though he had done so in the two annotations *Gerasenorum* (on Matt 8:28 and on Mark 5:1), to which he refers in the annotation *Gerasenorum* (on 8:26). His own preference was for Gadara and the Gadarenes, as these annotations and *multitudo regionis* (on 8:37) show. For modern discussion see Fitzmyer AB Luke 736–7.

22 The detail about the demoniac's leaping out may be a deduction from the parallel story at Matt 8:28.

23 The demons' fear of the end time is in Matt 8:29; cf also Mark 1:24 and Luke 4:34 with its paraphrase, where the demon also fears its own destruction, chapter 4 155 with the notes there.

But so that the extent of the miracle would be better known to everyone, Jesus asked the ungodly spirit what its name was. The spirit replied, 'Legion,' indicating by the military term, of course, that the man was in the grip not of one demon but of a countless multitude of demons.[24] For no great sin is without a great troop of faults. But no sickness of spirit is so savage, no number of crimes so great, that it does not yield to our Lord Jesus' command. All of them, by now fearing that very thing, begged that if they could not avoid expulsion, at least they might not be ordered to go into the abyss of Tartarus, the place that they knew was designated for them on the last day.[25] Now a large herd of pigs was grazing not far from there, on a hillside that overlooked the sea, so that from this fact we know that the territory was gentile and devoted to godlessness. The Jews certainly do not eat pork. But the demons asked that with the Lord's permission they might be allowed to move into the pigs: so great a lust for doing harm did the godless spirits have![26] But to make the miracle more evident and more fear provoking, Jesus permitted what they asked. Soon the demons left the man and settled into the pigs. And instantly the whole herd was driven in a rush headlong into the sea and died by drowning.

When the swineherds saw that, they fled in terror to the towns and villages and reported what had happened. Those people, scarcely believing what the herdsmen were saying, came out to see the evidence of such an unbelievable thing. They saw that the herd, only recently very numerous, was wiped out. They also found the man who earlier was held captive by demons and was well known to all for his remarkable wildness now calm and of sound mind and sitting clothed at Jesus' feet. For from being a host to demons he had been suddenly turned into a disciple of Jesus; and one who earlier was regularly driven to every kind of evil deed by godless spirits was now being shaped by the calm and gentle spirit of our most merciful Lord to complete zeal for godliness.

Then those who had been present and had seen with their own eyes that the man was a demoniac, and had heard that there was a legion of demons,

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24 'A countless multitude' (*innumera multitudine*) replaces Luke's 'many' (*multa*).

25 As he had done in the paraphrase on Matt 8:29, Erasmus here uses the Greco-Roman Tartarus for the Hebrew underworld; see CWE 45 149 with n37, and the paraphrase on Acts 2:24 CWE 50 19 with n70.

26 Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 28 (29) PG 57 354–5, Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.13 PL 35 1339, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 438D–439A, and Hugh of St Cher (on 8:32) 180r note that the demons ask to be sent into the pigs only to extend their own capacities to do harm.

but that now he was healed, told the others what had happened.[27] And so a kind of fear seized everyone, though they should rather have glorified God and embraced the power of the one who restored health to the poor wretch. Hence they wanted Jesus to go away, fearing his power but not understanding his goodness, and they were more moved by the loss of the herd than by the welfare of the man restored to health.[28] Still, the Gerasenes did not dare to throw him out but asked him by public request to leave their territory, so great was the fear that had taken hold of them. And so as not to cast a holy thing before dogs, Jesus went back to the ship.[29]

Moreover, the man who had been freed from demons begged Jesus to permit him to be in the company of the one to whom he owed his health. But Jesus did not allow it; he said, 'Go back to your house instead, so that when you tell your story and they see you, they may all learn for certain what you were before and what by God's gracious act you are now. Your people refuse me as a guest; at least be a witness among them to how much they begrudge themselves by rejecting me.' The man obeyed the Lord's instructions, and setting out for Decapolis and throughout all the towns, he preached to everyone what great benefits he had received from Jesus. This was a bare beginning of gospel preaching among thick-witted and irreligious people, most like those pigs into which the demons had settled.[30] And the

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27 The slightly awkward reference to a legion of demons in the paraphrase here is based on a manuscript tradition in Greek and Latin that included 'legion' in verse 36 instead of a word for 'demons' or 'beset by demons,' apparently paralleling a similar inclusion in Mark 5:15. See the notes in Nestle-Aland on both passages and Fitzmyer AB Luke 740. In an annotation *a legione* (on 8:36) Erasmus rejected this reading and did not use it in his NT; see the note to the annotation in ASD VI-5 526. The reading persisted in the Clementine Vulgate and DV, but not in AV. The paraphrase apparently accommodates the familiar Vulgate.

28 That the Gerasenes were concerned about the material loss they sustained in the death of the herd is suggested by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 808A.

29 The reference to casting holy or precious things before dogs may allude to Jesus' remark to the Syro-Phoenician woman at Mark 7:27. But Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1767A, discussing what the pigs represent, quotes Matt 7:6 from the Sermon on the Mount.

In 'went back to the ship' Erasmus takes no account of the participle in the Greek and Latin texts that says he 'boarded' the ship, perhaps to picture more logically the conversation reported in the next sentence.

30 Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.13 PL 35 1338, in a point-by-point allegorical analysis of this episode, equates the pigs with unclean and arrogant people ruled by demons through idol worship. For the deduction that the Gerasenes were not Jews but idol-worshipping gentiles, cf verse 32 and the paraphrase on it, 240.

demoniac's preaching was not totally without effect: many believed him and were amazed. In this image, of course, our Lord Jesus taught us that there are no people however godless to whom the gospel grace is not to be offered. Nonetheless it is not to be pushed upon the unwilling and scornful; rather, we are to depart from them in such a way that we leave a spark of true godliness behind, which perhaps, given the chance, will flare up.

And so Jesus was conveyed to the place he had come from, that is, to Galilee, where he was now famous and an object of amazement to everyone. Therefore a huge crowd of people welcomed him as he came back, for they had been waiting very eagerly for his return from the Gerasenes. And look, again there was an opportunity to make clear how Jesus was accessible to all people, rich and poor alike, good and bad, and how much less faith those had who seemed to be religious leaders among the Jews than those who were considered the most despised among the common people. For one of the leaders of the synagogue approached Jesus, a man named Jairus, who had a daughter at home, a child about twelve years old, and she was now breathing her last. So he fell at Jesus' feet, asking him to deign to come to his house and help his dying daughter. This is the way a doctor is usually called: 'Come, see what you can do.' How much fuller was the faith of the centurion who said that there was no need of his physical presence; with just a word Jesus could heal whomever he chose![31]

Jesus obliged Jairus and hurried towards his house. But look, on the way, the throng growing thick around him on all sides (so great a thirst did they all have to see and hear him), Jesus was almost being crushed. A woman had worked her way into the packed crowd, a woman who for twelve years now had struggled with a foul and disgusting disorder, a flow of blood. In her desire for good health she had spent all her resources on doctors who were always promising improvement. But they had brought no help, except that they added to her disease another evil, poverty. At this point the sensible woman, deprived of human assistance, fled to divine help, having formed a marvellous confidence in Jesus, that if she could touch any part of him, she would be healed. Yet shame prevented her from coming into his sight and revealing her shameful disease; but as if wanting to pilfer the benefit of health from him, she crept up from behind and touched the merest edge of his garment, which was being pulled this way and that in the press of the crowd.[32] No waiting – in an instant she felt the disease leave and the bleeding stop.

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31 See 7:6–8 and its paraphrase, 207.

32 The woman's sense of shame and reluctance to address Jesus openly is owing to the rules of ritual impurity of women in Mosaic law, as noted by Chrysostom

Now Jesus, not at all begrudging the woman her healing but wanting to show the head of the synagogue and the rest of the Jews a model of perfect faith, said, 'Who touched me?'[33] When others standing nearby said they had not touched him, Peter and the other disciples who stayed quite close to Jesus said, 'Teacher, a very tight-packed crowd of people presses and troubles you on every side, and, as if only one or two were here, are you asking who touched you?'[34] But hinting that he was not speaking of ordinary contact, which was what the disciples meant, Jesus replied, 'Someone touched me not in the ordinary way; whoever it was knows it. For at the touch I myself felt power going from me to the person who touched me.'

When no one answered, and Jesus was turning his eyes in all directions as if to seek out who it was who wanted to filch this benefit, the woman understood that what she had done did not escape Jesus, and with much trembling she came forward into Jesus' sight. Falling at his feet she admitted before all the people both why she had touched him and how she had been healed from her illness on the spot, though she had struggled with it for twelve years and the doctors had laboured in vain. Most merciful Jesus extracted this confession not to betray the poor woman but to show the Jews how much undoubting faith could do. Moreover, Jesus comforted the woman, frightened and expecting a scolding, saying, 'Daughter, your trust has earned you healing. Go in peace, and may this kindness of mine to you be permanent.' With these words he stung the Pharisees and scribes, who put more hope in their own actions than in the goodness of God.

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Hom in Matthaeum 31 (32) PG 57 371; cf Lev 15:19–28. DeWeese (n18 above) 36 n81 observes that an open statement of the woman's sense of shame before the men in the crowd (not specifically mentioned in the synoptics) is made in the Latin exegetical tradition by Optatus of Milevis *De schismate Donatistarum* PL 11 1061A and substantially repeated in sermon 65 of the eighty *Sermones* attributed to Fulgentius of Ruspe PL 65 937A–B.

The language of 'pilfering' and 'filching' (*suffurari*) the benefit desired is credited by the *Catena aurea* (on 8:44) to 'a Greek': '[Jesus] voluntarily allowed the theft [*rapinam*] of healing.'

33 Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 31 (32) PG 57 371, followed by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 809B, Hugh of St Cher (on 8:47) 182r, and the *Catena aurea* (on 8:45–6) (crediting the observation to Cyril), says that besides comforting the woman and confirming the faith of the crowd in general (points mentioned just below in the paraphrase on verses 47–8), one of Jesus' motives in drawing her out is to strengthen the faith of the head of the synagogue, who is about to hear that his daughter has died.

34 This sentence is punctuated in the lifetime editions with a question mark, as in the translation. LB VII 365E prints a period.

Our Lord Jesus had not yet finished saying this when someone from the house of the head of the synagogue[35] ran up and said to the man, 'Don't trouble the Lord, who will come in vain, for your daughter has just died.' The person who reported this thought no more grandly of Jesus than of any distinguished doctor who can help a sick person but not awaken a dead one. When Jesus saw that Jairus was grief stricken at the news, he comforted him, saying, 'Do not be afraid; only have faith, and the child shall be well.' When they reached the home of the head of the synagogue, Jesus did not allow anyone from the throng to come in with him except Peter, James, and John, and with them the child's father and mother.

When he came in he found the house full of mourning. For all the friends and relatives were weeping over the dead child, a duty usually displayed out of self-interest when rich people have departed this life. For they employ people to lament, to sing dirges, to give evidence of grief by beating their breasts.[36] Jesus put a stop to all this show, saying, 'Do not weep; for the child is not dead, she is sleeping.' But they mocked him, knowing beyond a doubt that the child was dead. Jesus, however, went with his few companions into the room where the child's lifeless corpse lay; and as if to wake a[37] sleeper, he took hold of her hand and, raising his voice, said to her, 'Get up, my child.'[38]

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35 'From the house of the head of the synagogue' (*ex aedibus Archisynagogi*). In Erasmus' day the Vulgate text read *ad principem synagogae* 'to the head of the synagogue.' But in an annotation *venit quidam ad principem synagogae* (on 8:49) he had noted that the Greek texts have παρὰ τοῦ ἀρχισυναγώγου, which looks as if it could mean 'from the head ...,' though Jairus is standing there in the crowd. The genitive here, Erasmus explains, does not belong to the preposition but to an understood 'house': 'from the head's house,' and 'to' is a copyist's misguided attempt at correction. Modern texts agree; see Nestle-Aland's notes on 8:49.

36 Cf the paraphrase on 7:12, 209, though there the grief of the mourners is presented as genuine. For the noisy crowd of mourners, cf Matt 9:23. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1770D comments on an old custom of using flute players to arouse expressions of grief.

37 'A sleeper.' *dormientem* in *1534* and *1535*; 'her' *eam* in *1523* and *1524*

38 In Luke's text, the mourners of verses 52 and 53 can appear to be with or near the corpse. Valla asks how Jesus could then ask the parents not to tell anyone what had happened (verse 56); his answer is that Greek (not Latin) texts say in verse 54, 'Everyone was sent outside' (see Nestle-Aland's note for this reading). Erasmus in a *1516* annotation *ipse autem* (on 8:54) says that the Greek phrase Valla mentions has been borrowed from Matt 9:25 and Mark 5:40 and inserted here. In a long *1519* addition, he adds that as Luke tells the story the crowd is not where the corpse is, since Jesus has already selected only a few to accompany him inside; perhaps the crowd is in a courtyard or vestibule, and the body in an interior room. The annotation aroused an objection from Edward

What happened then? No one wakes up more easily at the voice of a person rousing him than she came back to life at Jesus' voice calling her. For not only did her soul return to the dwelling from which it had departed, but she even got up and walked like a lively and active child.[39] Then, so that there would be more definite evidence of life restored, Jesus ordered her to be given food. On seeing this the child's parents were utterly dumbstruck. But Jesus told them not to tell anyone what had happened, as if wanting this miracle to be known to only a few; either in order to teach us that humans are not to hunt for the glory of good deeds or to indicate by this figure that in more trivial errors private reproof is sufficient. For the dead child symbolizes the person who has fallen into sin through weakness. Her death was still recent; the corpse had not emerged into public view. And so, the throng being shut out, the matter was concluded with only a few witnesses. But blessed are they whom Jesus deigns to take by the hand.[40]

Chapter 9

Now up to this point certainly Jesus carried out the gospel task by himself, shaping and instructing the twelve apostles in various ways, as the ones who would succeed to the responsibility of preaching after they had received the Holy Spirit. For that reason he wanted them to be constant witnesses of his

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Lee; Erasmus replied in *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* Note 54 CWE 72 160. In the paraphrase he clarifies the separation of crowd and small group by saying, 'into the room where the child's lifeless corpse lay.'

39 'And walked' is borrowed from Mark 5:42.

40 The location of this body, still in the house where she died, in contrast to the body of the widow's son in chapter 7, is allegorized as a soul not yet in desperate straits because of sin, much less cast beyond the city walls, ie at risk of eternal damnation. Augustine *Sermones de scripturis* 98 PL 38 593–4 says there are three stages of sin, symbolized by the three resuscitations of Jesus' ministry; cf chapter 7 n18. The daughter of Jairus symbolizes those who have sin in their hearts but not yet in their actions – the corpse is not yet in public view. The widow's son is the sinner who has proceeded to evil actions but is not yet despaired of. Lazarus, four days in the tomb, represents those established in evil practices and now committed to defending their ways as in fact righteousness. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 444D ends his commentary on chapter 8 with a reprise of Augustine's remarks; he also says (445C) that as publicly known sins require public penitence, so lesser sins can be removed by private penitence. The *Gloss* (on 7:15) has a simplified version of Augustine's scheme and (on 8:56) of Bede's remarks about penitence; the *Catena aurea* (on 8:56) and Hugh of St Cher (on 8:56) 182v make the same observation. DeWeese (n18 above) 39 n86 finds the same scheme in a work wrongly attributed to Augustine, *De vera et falsa poenitentia* 11 PL 40 1123.

deeds and words. But so that in the meantime they themselves might also furnish some indication of their capability for carrying out so great a responsibility and test themselves while the Lord still lived, he called them all together so they would not disagree in their preaching. In fact, lest the preaching of lowly and uneducated men be completely lacking in force, he gave them power and authority to cast out every type of demon and to heal every type of sickness.[1] For it was appropriate that those who preached the kingdom of God have lawful right over godless demons, the enemies of God, and that those who preached the teaching that heals all sicknesses of soul be empowered to heal bodily illnesses; and it was also fitting that mortals be attracted to the proclamation of the gospel by acts of kindness rather than by dire threats. 'Following my example,' he said, 'assist with your authority the diseases and distresses of everyone gladly and freely, lest you weaken the simplicity of gospel preaching with any suspicion of profit seeking.' Moreover, he laid out for them what they should teach. And he did not tell them to teach the ceremonies of the Law, soon to be abolished, or human regulations such as the scribes and Pharisees usually teach, going around sea and dry land to make a single convert.[2] He told them to teach that the kingdom of God was at hand,[3] now located not in physical objects but in spirit and power. For the time being it was enough for the untrained disciples to preach such things, to prepare the hearts of humankind for loftier instruction.

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1 'Power and authority' is *virtutem et potestatem*, as in the Vulgate text of 9:1, language that Erasmus will repeat just below in expressions translated 'empowered' and 'with your authority.' But he also adds other terms from the Latin vocabulary of moral control over others: *auctoritas* 'force' in the sense of moral or intellectual suasion, and *ius* 'lawful right.'
For the exercise of spiritual powers by the apostles, newcomers to preaching, to add persuasiveness to their message, especially for listeners not inclined to believe, see Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 64B (who says healing powers will compensate in persuasive power for the uneducated speech of rustics), Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 641B, Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 4 PL 76 1090C, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 445D–446A. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 813B notes that preaching and healing validate each other, for there are healings done by demons and unsound preaching by humans. Hugh of St Cher (on 9:2) 183r cites Jerome; the *Catena aurea* (on 9:1) cites Cyril.

2 This description of scribes and Pharisees is from Matt 23:15.

3 'The kingdom of God was at hand': cf Jesus' instructions in 10:9 and his own preaching, Mark 1:15. That the point of the message is the move from the corporeal (ie prescribed acts and objects) to nothing perceptible by the senses is noted by Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 32 (33) PG 57 381.

And so that worry about necessities for the body's life would not slow them down, he said to them, 'Take no baggage with you for the road, not a staff for defence, not a sack to carry food, not a belt to carry money, not two shirts each.[4] Be sure that you will lack none of these if with honest hearts you tend to the progress of the gospel according to my instructions. There will be people everywhere whose voluntary kindness will supply enough for men who live from day to day and who are content with little. And there is no reason for you to be anxious about a place to stay. Wherever you learn there are people deserving of the kingdom of God, lodge with them, lest by moving continually from one place to another you appear to be seeking out your own pleasure.[5] Instead, be content with what you find there and stay with those people until the progress of the gospel urges you to set off for a new location. But if it turns out somewhere that no one welcomes you,

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4 Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.30 PL 34 1112–14 has a long discussion about the apparent discrepancy between Matt 10:8 and Luke 9:3, who both say Jesus forbade the apostles to take a staff, and Mark 6:8, who says the apostles were allowed nothing *except* a staff (and sandals, which are forbidden in Matthew and not mentioned in Luke 9:3). His solution is that Mark's staff is the evidence that proves the worth of the one carrying it and thus gives permission for the apostles to use their judgment, as Paul did in earning his own living (1 Cor 9:11–12; cf chapter 8 n3). The forbidden kind of staff, he says, is one of temptation, ie to resort to violence in self-defence. Augustine is liberally excerpted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 446A–447A, summarized in the *Gloss* (on 9:3), and restated by Hugh of St Cher (on 9:3) 183r.

5 Erasmus' paraphrase on 9:3 uses two of the four corrections to the Latinity of the verse offered by Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 9:3): instead of *in via* 'on the road' Valla said a better translation of the Greek would be *in viam* 'for the road'; and instead of the cardinal number *duas tunicas* 'two shirts' (suggesting two for the whole group) the distributive *binas tunicas* 'two shirts each.' Valla thought the infinitive ἔχειν 'to have' was inadequately represented by *habeatis* 'should you have' in the Latin text but offered no better alternative; the paraphrase drops it entirely, making all the forbidden items in verse 3 the objects of Luke's and Erasmus' 'take' (*tuleritis*). See the annotations *in via* and *neque duas* (on 9:3), largely summarizing Valla.

That the missionaries are to find a household deserving of the kingdom of God is borrowed from Matt 10:11. That restless moving from one house to another both violates the laws of hospitality and gives the appearance that the guest is more interested in suiting himself than carrying out his mission is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1771D–1772A, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 32 (33) PG 57 383, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 447A–B quoting Ambrose, the *Gloss* (on 9:4) quoting Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 813C, and Hugh of St Cher (on 9:4) 183v. Erasmus cites Theophylact in his annotation *et inde exeatis* (on 9:4).

acknowledge the honour due your task, and do not try to push onto the unwilling something that ought to be sought for by everyone. Leave that town immediately, refusing so completely to take anything from people who reject your preaching that you even shake off any dust clinging to your feet against them, giving witness that you freely announced the kingdom of God to them and they themselves made themselves unworthy of so great a gift freely offered.'[6]

When Jesus had equipped them in these and many other conversations, the apostles departed two by two and travelled through the villages, everywhere preaching that the kingdom of God was at hand; and wherever they found people possessed by demons or sick people or those in bondage to some other physical defect, they healed them in Jesus' name. This was the first beginning of the apostles' teaching.[7]

Jesus' fame became so widespread through these things that news of all he was doing reached the tetrarch Herod. For since he did not know Jesus and was hearing that there was someone who with a word drove out demons, put diseases to flight, restored the maimed and the paralysed, healed lepers, and raised the dead, he was doubtful and perplexed in mind about who this sudden upstart might be.[8] Besides, some people were voicing the opinion that Jesus was John, whom Herod had killed a little earlier, who they said had risen from the dead and therefore now, as if he had become a

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6 Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 66B offers two reasons for the apostles to shake off dust from their feet: as evidence of their effort in coming to that town and that apostolic teaching had reached it; or to show that the apostles were taking nothing from the scornful, not even the necessities of life. Jerome's points are quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 447B and the *Gloss* (on 9:5). Erasmus' sentence incorporates both reasons, in the opposite order.
In the annotation *in testimonium supra illos* (on 9:5) Erasmus had said with some exasperation that in ἐπ' αὐτούς 'against them' the preposition ἐπί, which has multiple meanings, should have been translated *adversus* 'against' instead of *supra* 'over, concerning.' Here he chooses another Latin option, *in* with the accusative case, which also can mean 'against.'

7 That the preaching was of the imminence of the kingdom of God echoes Jesus' instructions in verse 2. That the apostles' healings were done 'in Jesus' name' is borrowed from the similar incident in 10:17; Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 447C cites also Mark 6:13 and James 5:14–15.

8 'Doubtful and perplexed' is *ancipitis perplexique animi*, more literally 'of divided and perplexed mind.' In an annotation *et haesitabat* (on 9:7) Erasmus had observed that the Greek διηπόρει can mean *haesitare* 'hesitate' or equally 'to be perplexed and doubtful, of divided purpose and intention' (*perplexum esse atque ancipitis consilii et animi dubium*). Here he chooses a simpler version of that observation.

demigod, was capable of such great miracles. Others said he was Elijah, the one carried off in a chariot of fire, who the Jews expected would come back, according to a prophecy of Malachi.[9] Others again suspected that he was some other of the early prophets whose memory was sacred to the Jews. But Herod feared for himself if John, whom he had killed, had come back to life, and thought it unbelievable that a man once dead should come back to life; he said, 'I beheaded John, and when he was out of the way, I thought no one was left to dare any great thing. But who is this man about whom I am hearing far greater things even than John ever did?' Then he sought an opportunity to see Jesus, not in order to become better but to satisfy his own curiosity; or, if it seemed like a good idea, to do to Jesus what he had done to John. But Jesus, well aware of this, did not make himself available to Herod. For he had not come to satisfy the greedy eyes of godless princes with his miracles but to lead the simple to salvation; and beheading did not suit him who had destined for himself the high banner of the cross.[10]

After this the twelve returned to Jesus, telling their stories with much excitement: how the preaching of the gospel had proceeded, and how many miracles they themselves had done in his name. But Jesus recalled them to humbleness, lest in the flush of such things they become too full of themselves. For, he said, miracles are done by the power of God, not that of humans, and sometimes are even produced through humans who are not destined for life eternal; and further, only godliness of heart makes a person blessed, whether a temporary power to do miracles is present or not.[11] So, in order to instruct them, by the act itself, how they were to feed the masses

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9 The chariot of fire: 2 (Vulg 4) Kings 2:11. The prophecy: Mal 4:5 (Vulg 3:23).

10 That Herod, like a typical prince, is more interested in his own amusement than spiritual matters was already suggested in the paraphrase on 3:19, 114–15 and occurs again in the paraphrase on 23:8–9 CWE 48 210. The point is noted here by Nicholas of Lyra (on 9:7). Jesus crucified as a banner of salvation, besides being a commonplace of patristic and later expression, goes back to John 3:14 and 12:32; see the paraphrases on these verses, CWE 46 48 and 155. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 448C, comparing John and Jesus in 9:9, defines Jesus' superiority as shown in his being raised on high on the cross, while John's lesser status is marked by his being shortened by beheading.

11 There is no report of the return of the missionaries in Matthew 10; in Mark 6:31 there is only Jesus' instruction to retreat for a rest. In the report of the return from the second mission at Luke 10:17–20 Jesus rebukes them gently, emphasizing the importance of inner disposition over miraculous accomplishments, as here. Nicholas of Lyra (on 9:10), evidently relying on the Mark passage, comments that Jesus already knew what they reported, but they reported to him in the fashion of a friendly gathering of students with their teacher and each other.

on the food of the gospel word that they had learned from him, Jesus withdrew with them to a deserted place where they might rest awhile from their labours. For there was such a great influx of people that there was no time for the disciples even to take food.[12] So he took them away into the wilderness adjoining Bethsaida, a Galilean town, which was the common birthplace of Peter, Andrew, and Philip.[13] This retreat, of course, was not devoted to foolish pleasures or to sleep but to quietness for prayer and thanksgiving to God. For such ought to be the recreation of apostolic men.[14]

But when word had spread about where Jesus had gone, an immense crowd of people swarming together from all sides followed him into the wilderness. And seeing their eagerness, Jesus came forward from the secluded spot into which he had retreated and, far from repelling them, actually went to meet them willingly – teaching his disciples at the same time that after a brief retreat there was to be a prompt return to carrying out gospel duties. And when Jesus came forward and saw that the endless mass of men, women, and children had come such a long way into the wilderness on foot, and like sheep that had lost their shepherd were wandering about here and there, he was touched by pity.[15] First he fed their hearts, saying to them

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12 This comment is borrowed from Mark 6:31b.

13 'The wilderness adjoining Bethsaida' is *desertum vicinum . . . Bethsaidae*. In Erasmus' day and for some while thereafter the corresponding part of verse 10 read *desertum qui est Bethsaidae* 'wilderness that is at [or 'belongs to'] Bethsaida.' Hugh of St Cher (on 9:10b) 184r argues that the wilderness is not at Bethsaida but under its control, as the interlinear *Gloss* on the verse points out; Erasmus also explains 'near Bethsaida' in an annotation *qui est Bethsaidae* (on 9:10). Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 9:10) knew and preferred a Greek reading 'to the wilderness that belongs to a city called Bethsaida.' Modern texts remove all mention of the wilderness and say that they went to a city 'called Bethsaida'; see Nestle-Aland on this verse and Fitzmyer AB Luke 765. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 449A, citing 'the books on places' (eg Jerome *De locis Hebraicis* PL 23 884C), mentions that Bethsaida is the home of Andrew, Peter, and Philip; he is cited by the *Catena aurea* (on 9:10).

14 Cf the description of proper retreats for preachers in the paraphrase on John 6:3 CWE 46 75–6. Similar remarks are made by Hugh of St Cher (on 9:10) 184r, who points out that the following description of feeding the crowd exemplifies this general point of refreshment for preachers who then must return to their duties.

15 Jesus' pity for the crowd is borrowed from Matt 14:14. The paraphrases on all the feeding miracles generally follow the same lines; cf Matt 14:13–21 with CWE 45 224–7, Mark 6:31–44 with CWE 49 84–6 and 8:1–9 with CWE 49 97–100, and John 6:1–13 with CWE 46 76–8. All comment to a greater or lesser degree on Jesus' teaching the apostles by example their role as witnesses of the miracle and as future bishops who will preside over distribution of the sacramental bread,

many things about the kingdom of God, and then he healed those who were in the grip of illnesses and many other bodily afflictions.[16]

The day began to draw to a close while all this took place. The apostles, in fact, reflecting that the throng was immense, the evening was coming on, the place was far away from towns and villages, and there were no food supplies, spoke privately to Jesus,[17] saying, 'Dismiss the crowds for now so that they can go into the little towns and villages nearby and buy food for themselves, for this place is a wilderness.' But to show that food would not be lacking for those who wholeheartedly devote their time to gospel teaching, and also acting to make sure that the miracle he had decided to perform would be quite plain, Jesus said to the disciples, 'There's no need for them to go out of their way into the towns and villages for this purpose; instead, give them food yourselves' – suggesting that sometimes it was part of an apostle's charge to supply the needs of his flock from his own resources, however scant. Nor were the apostles lacking in will; they regretted that they lacked the means.[18] And so they replied, 'We have no food, except for five loaves

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which is the word (*sermo*) of the gospel; the necessity of beginning with thanks to God, from whom the word comes, and of relying on God to multiply what seems to human eyes an inadequate resource; and the simplicity of the food/gospel offered compared to the elaborate confections of Jewish or philosophical teaching. Cf Jane E. Phillips 'Food and Drink in Erasmus' Gospel Paraphrases' ERSY 14 (1994) 24–45. All these threads are to be found in traditional exegesis as well.

Matt 14:13 and Mark 6:33 specify that the crowd came on foot; Luke and John 6:2 do not. Erasmus notes here that the crowd includes men, women, and children; in discussion of the five thousand men in Matt 14:21, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 104D–105A remarked that they were counted the way the count was made in Num 1:3 and so did not include the women and children. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 449B, commenting on 9:11, cites Jerome and points out that the crowds came on foot, not riding animals or in wagons. He is echoed by the *Gloss* (on 9:11).

16 Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1772D–1773B notes that Jesus preaches and heals by forgiveness of sins and then feeds the crowd; he is followed by the *Gloss* (on 9:12) and Hugh of St Cher (on 9:11–12 *mystice*) 184V, who makes more specific distinctions between the bodily acts described and their spiritual interpretations. Erasmus will elaborate on the spiritual significance of the whole episode, 252–3.

17 'Spoke privately' is *submonere*, a rare compound of *monere*. But it is found in Terence *Eunuchus* 570 and Suetonius *Augustus* 53, authors with whom Erasmus was quite familiar; see L&S at *summoneo*.

18 Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 644C says that when the apostles mention the crowd's hunger and express their lack of means to satisfy it (verses 12 and 13), they are moved by a kindhearted concern, not by annoyance, and that Jesus' response

and two fish. These supplies will scarcely be enough for the few of us for supper, unless you want us to go into the nearby towns and buy enough food for this huge crowd. But many denarii would be necessary to do that, while we have among us scarcely any money.' For there were about five thousand men. To this Jesus said, 'Have them all sit down in groups so that fifty sit down together.' For people who are giving a dinner party for many usually assign a fixed number to each table in this way, so that the stewards and servants know how much they have to prepare.

Although the apostles saw no preparations, at the Lord's bidding they nonetheless had the people sit down in groups, as if a feast were soon going to be served. In like simplicity the people too obeyed. So then Jesus, a strange new kind of host, took the five loaves and two fish and, raising his eyes to heaven, in words of good omen first blessed the food, then broke it, and next distributed it to the disciples for them to put before the crowd.

All the people were refreshed to the point of fullness, and, far from anything being wanting, when everyone was satisfied, twelve baskets of scraps were gathered up by the disciples. In these matters too lies the image of more hidden teaching: the apostles have supplies, but they belong to Jesus. As those provisions are cheap and ordinary, they are also very small. For the teaching of Moses is elaborate; the learning of philosophers is varied and sumptuous. Yet the gospel word is simple and short, though sufficient to restore the souls of all peoples if it is both delivered and received as it ought to be. The word on which souls are fattened is entrusted to apostolic men, but they do not put it before the people unless it is first blessed and broken by Christ. For the fruit of gospel preaching is only real when the teacher does not claim as his own the gift of learning that was entrusted to him, and does not heedlessly bring it out as from his own store but returns it to Christ to be blessed. Otherwise the work of the teacher will be without effect if Christ does not bless it, break it, and with his own hands pass it on for distribution. For whatever comes from his hands is effective. He is the one who feeds, refreshes, satisfies. Bishops are nothing but servants and stewards of another's generosity.

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is to educate them to their pastoral duties. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 449C says that since they have given witness that they did not have enough, Jesus challenges them to break up the bread in order to make the magnitude of the sign better known by their witness; Bede is followed by the *Gloss* (on 9:13) and Hugh of St Cher (on 9:13 *mystice*) 184v. Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 816D–817A, quoted by the *Catena aurea* (on 9:13), makes the same point about the apostles as witnesses.

Meanwhile the people sit on the ground in groups, not at all hesitant, not at all grumbling, signifying that modesty and wholehearted faith ought to be present in a church gathering, and discord and all uproar should be far removed. What is more, reflect with me on this mystery: our Lord Jesus first taught and healed, and then fed. Now the divine word is indeed the food of the soul, but a portion of it is not denied even to the ungodly and the candidates for baptism. For it is medicine for the mind and refreshment for the weak. For salutary teaching does the same thing in the hearts of sinners that Jesus did with his word and touch in bodily ills. But there is a mystic bread that is only given to those who have already been instructed and healed. This of course is that heavenly bread of the Lord's body, which is not given to those who have not yet been received through baptism into the body of the church nor to those whose heart is still in the grip of some grave crime, as of a mortal illness.[19] And that solid food of more hidden wisdom, which Paul did not offer except among the perfect, is not to be offered to just anyone.[20]

Then, since the Lord had balanced all his words and deeds in such a way that at one time he produced signs of his divine power, at another showed

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19 In the early church the candidates for baptism, *catechumeni* 'catechumens,' (a rite then mostly confined to adults) were admitted to church services but solemnly dismissed, along with others not eligible for the Eucharist, after the liturgy of the word and before the Eucharist proper began; in some traditions, especially Eastern ones, it is still done today. See ODCC at 'catechumens' and 'penitents'; and the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (2003) at 'catechumenate.' The custom is alluded to by eg Augustine *Sermones de scripturis* 49 PL 38 324.

20 The reference to Paul is to the distinction between the 'milk' and the 'solid food' of 1 Cor 3:2–4, interpreted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1773A–B in a long treatment of this passage as the distinction between hearing the word of God and receiving the sacramental elements of Christ's body and blood. Ambrose also describes Jesus' healing words and actions as a necessary preliminary, like confession and absolution, to his feeding them from a food supply that multiplies by being divided. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 450D–451A has an allegorical explanation of the feeding miracles compounded of elements from all four gospel narratives; he includes a point not in Ambrose, that the leftovers gathered by the apostles are 'more sacred mysteries that cannot be understood by the untrained yet are not to be passed over in neglect but are to be studied by the perfect,' ie the apostles and the bands of teachers that follow them. The point reappears in the *Gloss* (on 9:17); Ambrose and Bede are summarized by the *Catena aurea* (on 9:13–17). Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 49 (50) PG 58 499 has a simpler version in a comment on Matt 14:20: 'He gave the leftovers not to the crowd but to the disciples, for the crowds were less perfected than the disciples'; Theophylact *Enarr in Matt* PG 123 300B has a similar remark. All of this is left untouched by Erasmus.

the actuality of his human nature, people's opinions about him varied. But it was necessary that there should be a harmonious and concordant proclamation about him among those through whom he had decided to renew the world; so when he was praying alone with his disciples, he inquired of them what people thought about him, or who they said he was. The disciples replied, 'Some suppose you are John the Baptist, who has come back to life, but others think you are Elijah, who the Jews think will return before the Messiah comes. Still others believe you are one of the early prophets restored to life.'

Then Jesus said, 'The common folk wavers, as is its habit, and has no fixed opinion. But you, who know me closer at hand and in daily life, who do you say I am?' At that Peter, more passionate than the others, replied in the name of them all, 'We know that you are the Messiah whom God anointed with every heavenly endowment.'[21] Now Jesus certainly approved their straightforward declaration, but he warned them not to say what they thought to anyone,[22] for, he said, the time had not yet come for that mystery to be revealed openly to all; first the sacrifice of his death had to be completed, and the glory of that name had to be reached by way of many hardships.

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21 The presentation of Peter here echoes that in the paraphrase on John 21:15 CWE 46 223 in specifying both Peter's more intense love and his function as spokesman or mouthpiece. Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 54 (55) PG 58 533 describes Peter as 'the mouthpiece of the apostles, the consistently impassioned, the leader of the chorus of apostles,' restated in similar terms by Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 817C. Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1780D, quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 451D, says Peter answered *prae ceteris* 'ahead of the others'; Erasmus uses the phrase in a different sense, *prae ceteris ardentior* 'more passionate than the others,' and expresses the sense of *os* 'mouthpiece' (which he had used in the paraphrase on John 21:15) with *omnium nomine* 'in the name of them all.'

The paraphrase on Peter's answer replaces Luke's 'Christ of God' with 'Messiah' and elaborates on 'anointed,' the meaning of the Greek and Hebrew terms, chapter 4 147 with n66, but does not incorporate 'Son of the living God' from the parallel in Matt 16:16. The opening of the next sentence, however, like Matt 16:17, notes Jesus' approval of the answer he has received (not in Luke) before proceeding to the paraphrase on 9:21 proper.

22 'He warned them' is *interminatur*. Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 9:21) had asked why the Vulgate translator had used the verb *increpare* 'rebuke, accuse' here as a translation of ἐπιτιμᾶν, which he had normally translated with *comminare* 'threaten,' when there was no place here for rebuking as if they had done wrong, but only for warning that they should do no wrong in this matter. Erasmus had an annotation *at ille increpans illos* (on 9:21) that made exactly the same point (without citing Valla) and proposed instead the verbs *interdicere* 'forbid' or *interminare* 'forbid with threats,' his choice here. Cf ASD VI-5 529 209–12n.

'For it is necessary,' he said, 'that the Son of Man endure many things and be reproached by elders and scribes and leaders of the priests, and finally even be killed, and then rise again on the third day. But care must be taken lest even the glory of this name now proclaimed not find acceptance because of my bodily suffering and death, and become an obstacle to my dying.' But when he had hushed Peter, who was horrified at mention of his death and was urging him to different plans,[23] he began to encourage his disciples also to the imitation of his death, saying, 'It seemed best to the Father that I should reach glory in this way. Anyone who wants to be my disciple must be an imitator of my death if he wants to share in my blessedness. It is not enough to follow in my footsteps. It is necessary to follow me in actions; otherwise I will not recognize my disciple. For one who would undertake the preaching of the gospel must deny himself entirely and renounce all the cares of this life: wealth, pleasure, honour, kinship, ties of affection, and finally life itself, and must take up his cross daily, with a heart always ready for everything you see me endure. I the teacher shall go before; let one who wants to be my disciple follow.

'And there is no reason for you to fear a violent death. To perish in this way is to be saved. For whoever throws life away for my sake has placed his life in safe keeping. On the other hand, whoever recoils from the gospel business and wants to save his body's life will lose his soul's life, which ought to be regarded as truly authentic life. To throw everything away for the sake of one's soul is the mark of a prudent person.[24] For what will it profit a person if he gains whatever this world has for the seeking while he throws his own self away? When a person dies, all he has acquired dies too. But one who has lost everlasting life dies completely.

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23 Peter's horrified intervention is not in Luke but is reported at Matt 16:22–3 and Mark 8:32–3. But see the paraphrase on verse 33, 257.

24 Verse 24 of Luke (nearly identical to Matt 16:25) has two propositions: one who wants to save his life will lose it; and one who loses his life on my account will save it. The paraphrase elaborates not just the vocabulary but also the propositions: to die my kind of death or for my sake is to be saved; one who tries to save his body's life will lose his soul; to lose everything including bodily life is to save the soul. Where the Gospel here twice uses ψυχή or *anima* (both of which mean first the life principle of a person or animal and only later a theological soul) for 'soul' (in most English biblical translations), Erasmus uses *vita* 'life' in his first and second propositions but in the third distinguishes between *vita corporis* 'body's life' and *vita animae* 'life of the soul,' which is *vera vita* 'authentic life.' Cf his 'everlasting life' (*vita aeterna*) just below.

'It should not shame my disciple to suffer the things that I am going to suffer. It should not shame him to proclaim my teaching among all people. For whoever is ashamed of me and my words before mortals and is offended at the disgrace of the cross, the Son of Man in turn will be ashamed of him,[25] when he has laid aside the weakness of the flesh and comes again, revealing to the whole world the majesty that is his, the Father's, and the holy angels'. And do not doubt that what I am saying will happen one day. I assure you most definitely that there are those standing here among you who will not depart from this life without first seeing, in some degree, the majesty of the kingdom of God, which lies hidden now but someday will be open to all.'

Now so that Jesus might make good on what he had promised, on about the eighth day after this talk he chose three out of the twelve, Peter, James, and John, and went up on a mountain, as was his custom, to pray.[26] And in the midst of his prayer suddenly his face took on a different appearance, full of majesty and glory, and his clothing shone with a snowy brightness.[27] And what is more, two men were visible at the same time, of like majesty, speaking with him, one of whom was Moses and the other Elijah. For the Law in

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25 In paraphrasing verse 26 Erasmus uses a commoner Latin verb *pudere* 'be ashamed, feel shame' for the Vulgate's *erubescere* 'blush, feel shame, be ashamed.' In a *1522* annotation *nam qui me erubuerit* (on 9:26) he asserted that *erubescere* is not often construed with complementary infinitives or modifying nouns, as *pudere* commonly is (a view that seems not to be borne out by L&S at *erubesco*), and also that he made the change in his NT text to suit more delicate ears than his own.

26 That the transfiguration is a (not the only) fulfilment of the promise just made in verse 27, that persons then living would not die before seeing the kingdom of God, is noted by Ambrose *In Lucam expos* PL 15 1788A, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 653A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 453D, the interlinear and marginal *Gloss* (on 9:27), and Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 820B.

27 'A different appearance' is *alia species*, where the Vulgate has *species altera*, which means 'the other appearance.' In an annotation *species vultus eius altera* (on 9:29) Erasmus had noted that *alia* is a more correct word than *altera*.
Majesty and glory' is *majestas et gloria*. But Erasmus uses the phrase in the paraphrase on verse 29 to describe Jesus, where no such expression is in Luke's text. In the Vulgate and in Erasmus' own text in his *1527* NT *majestas* describes Moses and Elijah in verse 31 and Jesus in verse 32, translating δόξα. In the annotation *in majestate* (on 9:31) he had expressed his preference for *gloria* as the translation of δόξα.
'Snowy brightness' (*niveo candore*), in place of the 'shining white' clothing of verse 29. In Matt 17:2 the old Vulgate read that his clothes were 'white like snow' (*alba sicut nix*); *niveo* is an adjective formed from *niv-*, the stem of *nix* 'snow.'

its figures had foreshadowed Jesus, the prophecies had pointed to him. What else is the conversation of these men with Jesus than the consensus of Old and New Testaments?[28] But their conversation was about the type of death that, according to the prophecy they had once made known, the Lord would accomplish at Jerusalem, so that again the sweetness of his glory was tempered by mention of his death.

Yet the disciples did not grasp these things clearly, because their eyes were heavy with sleep. But when they were fully awake, they saw the majesty of the Lord plainly, and also the two men standing with him. When these two began to move away from Jesus, Peter, fearing that the whole joyous sight would likewise go away, said to Jesus, 'Teacher, we don't need to go anywhere else from here. Goodbye to Jerusalem,[29] which threatens you with death! Instead let us make three booths here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' Peter said this as if drunk on the sweetness of the vision, not realizing what he was saying. For he was looking for the triumphal procession before the victory and the prize before the race.[30] As Peter was

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28 That Moses and Elijah are marks of the prefigurement of Jesus in the Law and the prophets and that the conversation of the three expresses the consensus of the two Testaments is stated or implied by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1789B, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 56 (57) PG 58 550, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 127A, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 653A–B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 455A (in his second explication), the *Gloss* (on 9:30–1) quoting Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 821B, and in part in the seventh point (of fifteen) given by Hugh of St Cher (on 9:30) 187r. That Moses is a lawgiver is obvious from his role in the first five books of the OT; for Elijah as prophet see 1 (Vulg 3) Kings 17–21, 2 (Vulg 4) Kings 1–2, Mal 4:5 (Vulg 3:23), and Matt 17:10–12.

29 'Goodbye' is *valeat*, an expression of scorn or dismissal in colloquial or conversational language of the Roman comic playwrights, Cicero, and Horace. See L&S at *valeo* I.B.d.δ. There is no reference to Jerusalem in verse 33 nor in the parallel passages in Matthew and Mark; Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 56 (57) PG 58 552, cited by Hugh of St Cher (on 9:33) 187v, specifically says that in this scene Peter, having already been rebuked for urging Jesus to avoid Jerusalem (see n23), did not dare to mention it again. Erasmus' Peter is brasher.

30 Hugh of St Cher (on 9:33) 187r describes Peter's state thus: 'as if tipsy on the one drop of celestial wine that he had drunk, or seen.' For Erasmus' allusion to a Roman 'triumphal procession' (*triumphus*) here, cf Eph 4:8 quoting Ps 68:18 (Vulg 67:19), and the paraphrase on it, CWE 43 329 with n17. For the prize and the race, see 1 Cor 9:24. The Vulgate spelling of the word for 'prize' is *bravium*, though Erasmus here uses *brabeum*, a transliteration of the Greek βραβεῖον that is closer to its Greek original. Noël Béda took exception to this alteration of the Vulgate word, to which Erasmus gave an irritated response in the *Divinationes ad notata Bedae* LB IX 493A, professing amazement that theologians might object to a pronunciation used by Demosthenes.

speaking, a cloud came up suddenly and overshadowed the disciples, who in their mortal bodies were no longer sustaining the sight of so much glory. But while Moses and Elijah went into the cloud, disappearing from the disciples' eyes (for it was right that when the light of gospel truth appeared, the foreshadowings and indistinct puzzles of figures should give way), the voice of the Father sounded from the cloud, saying, 'Until now the Jews looked up to Moses and Elijah, who prophesied about my Son. They were great, but they were my servants. This is that Son of mine, uniquely dear to my heart, so listen to him.'

As this voice sounded, Jesus was discovered alone, lest they think the witness of the voice concerned anyone else but him.[31] Then the three disciples, just as they had been bidden by the Lord, kept silent, and they did not tell the secret of that sight to anyone until he had risen from the dead.[32] For the Lord did not want his divine majesty proclaimed before his death, either so that nothing would hinder the sacrifice by which the human race had to be restored, or so that what no one was likely to believe should be proclaimed to no effect. Further, by the fact itself he taught us that if there is anything grand in us, it ought to be hidden rather than boasted about, and if we have some power bestowed by God, it ought to be made known by actions rather than by proclamation.

The next day Jesus came down from the mountain with the three disciples. He found a huge crowd of people around the disciples he had left behind in order to climb the mountain. Now when the people saw Jesus returning, they ran to meet him, for they had missed him. And something had just happened for which they required his presence. For a man from the crowd was shouting, 'Teacher, I beg you, may my son's misfortune move you. He is the only son I have, and he is in the grip of a very savage demon

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31 That the disappearance of Moses and Elijah before the voice speaks from the cloud signifies the superior status of Jesus, the Son not a servant, and / or the fulfilment and end of Jewish prophecy is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1792B–C, Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 56 (57) PG 58 553, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 656B–C, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 456C, the *Gloss* (on 9:36) quoting Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 824A, and Hugh of St Cher (on 9:36) 188r. The *Catena aurea* (on 9:33–6) cites Ambrose, Cyril, and Theophylact.

32 The disciples' silence until after the resurrection is noted in Matt 17:9 and Mark 9:9, not in Luke. That the purpose of Jesus' prohibition is the avoidance of disbelief or scandal, as above in the paraphrase on verse 22, 255, is noted by Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 128A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 456D quoting Jerome, the *Gloss* (on 9:36) quoting Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 824A, and Hugh of St Cher (on 9:36b) 188r.

that seizes him repeatedly and harasses him in terrible ways, dashing him to the ground with a great shout and tearing him to pieces while he foams at the mouth. And whenever it seizes him, it scarcely leaves him alone without mangling his whole body. I asked your disciples to cast the spirit out. They tried, but they couldn't do it.'

Jesus understood that this had happened because of the unbelief of the father who was asking for his son's health and because of the still weak faith of his own disciples. He cried out, saying, 'O distrustful nation, and not at all wholehearted, how long am I to busy myself among you and suffer such things? Am I still not getting you to trust me? Does the weakness of this flesh still stand in your way?'[33] And turning to the man and at the same time requiring from him steadier faith, he said, 'Bring your son here.' Now as the boy was brought to Jesus, the demon seized him again, dashing him to the ground; and soon Jesus restored him to health and gave back cured one whom his father had brought there as incurable.[34]

As pitiable as the sight of the illness had been, they all marvelled just as much at the presence of divine power. But since Jesus' fame was growing daily brighter because of deeds of this kind, a certain human glory tempted the disciples' hearts because they had such a teacher, one in whose name they themselves were doing miracles too. But Jesus recalled them from this feeling to contemplation of the humiliation with which they would be met later on. 'The glory of miracles delights you,' he said, 'but it is more important that you fix in your hearts these words from which your spirit recoils.[35] For it is

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33 The traditional exegetes agree that the disciples' inability to cure the boy is due in part to the weakness of their own faith (*fiducia*), in part to the weakness of the father's faith, and in general to Jewish resistance to Jesus' message (Erasmus says *natio* 'nation' here rather than the *generatio* 'generation' in verse 41). See Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 57 (58) PG 58 561, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 129B–130A, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 656D–657A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 457B–C quoting Jerome, Hugh of St Cher (on 9:40–1) 188v citing Bede, and the *Catena aurea* (on 9:40–1) citing Chrysostom and Cyril.

34 Erasmus repeats the same word stem *san-* three times, not easily represented in English: *sanitas* 'health,' *sanus* 'cured,' and *insanabilis* 'incurable.'

35 'In your hearts' is *in cordibus vestris*, as in the Vulgate verse 44; 'your spirit [or 'mind'] recoils' (*abhorret animus vester*) is part of Erasmus' paraphrase, not the Gospel text. Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 9:44) had pointed out that the Greek texts he saw had τὰ ὦτα τὰ ὑμῶν 'in your ears,' not 'hearts.' Erasmus repeated the observation in the annotation *ponite vos in cordibus vestris* (on 9:44) and added that Jesus said 'ears' not 'hearts' because the disciples would not understand what he said. In the paraphrase he accommodates the familiar Vulgate word but distinguishes the absence of real understanding by using the multivalent

chiefly necessary [for you] to remember what [you] all will find necessary to imitate.[36] I will see to the glory. For what I have said already and am saying again will take place, that the Son of Man, whose glory now delights you, will soon be taken captive and surrendered into the hands of men and afflicted in many ways and finally be put to death.'

Although these words had already been heard more than once, they had not yet taken root in the disciples' hearts. For they were unable to remember what they did not like to hear. They recoiled from the mention of death, intent on the glory of Jesus and not understanding that first the glory of the Lord chiefly had to have light shed upon it through the shame of the cross. They did hear about his death, but as if in a dream, not at all understanding the meaning of what was being said. Yet they did not dare ask him what his words meant, remembering that Peter, on putting himself forward, had heard the words, 'Get behind me, Satan; you are wise in human affairs, not in God's affairs.'[37]

After this Jesus went to Capernaum.[38] But as for his still flesh-bound disciples, since they had seen the glory of his miracles, had heard of the promised majesty of the kingdom of God, and had themselves done wonders in Jesus' name, a certain human calculation arose in their minds. This finally broke out into a discussion among them as they travelled, about which one was going to have pride of place in God's kingdom.[39] For they were

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animus 'heart, mind, spirit' and so on. *Cor* 'heart' is equally multivalent; see L&S at each word.

36 'Will find necessary' is *oportebit* in the lifetime editions (future tense); *oportebat* in LB VII 372A (imperfect tense), 'was necessary.'
With this 'impersonal' (ie not defined by a specific person-ending) verb *oportet*, there is normally a pronoun or noun to indicate on whom the necessity rests. In the paraphrase there is only the word 'all,' but Latin allows the persons being addressed to be understood. Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 458A notes the emphasis in this verse on the disciples and their privileged knowledge of both Jesus' divine power and his future redeeming sacrifice; Nicholas of Lyra (on 9:44) says Jesus means that the disciples should not be competing ambitiously but humbling themselves. Hence the insertion of English 'you' in this sentence.

37 This is Jesus' statement at Matt 16:23 and Mark 8:33, not recorded in Luke.

38 Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 458C points out in his explication of verses 46–8 that Matthew (17:24–18:1) and Mark (9:33) indicate that the disciples' discussion about priority took place on the way to Capernaum, and Jesus' question to them came after they had arrived there and (says Mark) settled into a house.

39 Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 58 (59) PG 58 568 says that the disciples experience 'something human'; he is quoted by Hugh of St Cher (on 9:46), who specifies that it was ambition or perhaps jealousy, and adds a long discussion about social ambition in church and world.

daydreaming that in the kingdom of heaven there would be something like what they had seen in the courts of princes or the palaces of the rich, where the greater is whoever is prouder and bolder. But though Jesus was well aware of what they had been debating among themselves, on entering the house he still asked them what was the subject they had debated as they travelled. They were silent out of embarrassment. To show them that their calculations and secret conversations were not hidden from him, Jesus took a young boy and set him close to him and calling the twelve together, said to them, 'You are having a discussion about greatness. With me, the greatest are those who are the least. What is simpler or humbler than this boy? So you ought to be if you want to be leaders in the gospel kingdom. The kingdom of faith and love knows nothing of self-seeking, nothing of dominion, nothing of tyranny. Whoever welcomes this boy in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. If I have exercised dominion over you, then go on and argue about primacy; but if instead I have been a servant of the betterment of everyone, shunning all the glory of this world, then be sure that the great one among you will be the one who by despising glory, by self-control, by eagerness to be a servant to all has been the least of all.'

Then, since they had heard that even little children were to be welcomed in Jesus' name, it occurred to John that they had excluded someone from a share in the gospel. So he was in doubt whether, just as everyone was to be admitted to the fellowship of gospel salvation, everyone was likewise admissible to the task of gospel preaching and the performance of miracles. And here too there was a subtle unspoken feeling of jealousy. For Jesus had given the power of casting out demons and healing diseases only to the twelve. They did not think that this honour should be shared with others.[40] So John said, 'Teacher, when we were sent out by you and were doing our

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40 John's concern here tends to be described as whether outsiders to the group of loyal followers should be excluded from the invocation of Jesus' name; Jesus' answer then makes room for distinguishing between the firmer and the weaker in faith yet allows that each has a place in the gospel mission. See Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1793B, Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* PL 34 1219–20, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 459A summarizing Ambrose, the *Gloss* (on 4:49) citing Ambrose and Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 828A–C, Hugh of St Cher (on 9:49) 189v, the *Catena aurea* (on 9:49) quoting Ambrose, Cyril, and Theophylact, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 9:49). Theophylact raises the possibility, only to reject it, that John and the other disciples were motivated by some arrogance and resentment, ie jealousy; Erasmus includes this psychological analysis. See also the preceding note.

gospel work, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, though he is not one of the twelve and does not even follow you. We stopped him from doing it because he does not belong to our fellowship.' But Jesus, who nowhere allows himself to be preached by ungodly spirits, taught that mortals of whatever kind are not to be prohibited from the business of the gospel. 'Even if they do it less than wholeheartedly,' he said, 'provided they do what they are doing in the name of Jesus, they are doing the same as you. For whoever is not against us is by that very fact acting for us, because he is not acting against us.[41] Every kind of support is a help for a new thing that must be spread widely by all available means. The miracle belongs not to the one who does it but to the one who declares his power through his human servant.[42] So whoever performs a miracle by invocation of my name illuminates my glory and takes from himself the right to speak ill of me thereafter, since in his own experience he has found my name to be so effective.'

Then it happened that since the time was drawing near when he was going to leave the world behind and be welcomed into heaven, the Lord began a journey, showing clearly in his very expression that he was going to Jerusalem as one who was going to confront the appointed time of his death.[43] So he sent some of the apostles ahead as messengers to prepare a

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41 The textual tradition of this verse varies in the pronouns between first and second person: 'against us . . . for us' or 'against you . . . for you.' The words for 'us' and 'you' in Greek and Latin differ by one letter only: ἡμῶν / ὑμῶν and *nos, nobis* / *vos, vobis*. See the notes in Nestle-Aland on verse 50; that text reads 'you.' The biblical text printed in the 1498 edition of the *Gloss* used here has 'you.' Hugh of St Cher (on 9:50) 190r notes that there is a difference in the reading; Erasmus has no annotation here or on Mark 9:40, where the same issue occurs. In his *1527* NT the Greek text and Erasmus' version have 'us,' and the Vulgate has 'you.' The Clementine Vulgate reads 'you.'

42 There is specific reference to the operation of miracles by Christ through his human servants, rather than by any power inherent in those persons themselves, in the discussions of verses 49–50 by Theophylact and Hugh of St Cher cited in n40; and in a quotation of Cyril in the *Catena aurea* (quoted in an editor's note in PG 72 661B–C).

43 'Be welcomed' is *recipiendus*, from *recipio*, the same verb Erasmus had used in paraphrasing Jesus' remarks on 'welcoming' a child in verse 48; it is used here for the Vulgate's *assumptio* 'assumption,' which Hugh of St Cher (on 9:51) 190r had said meant the same thing as his passion and resurrection. Hugh went on to say that the biblical 'He set his face to go to Jerusalem' means 'He was willing to go to Jerusalem with a mind unafraid.' Erasmus commented in the annotation *facies eius erat euntis* (on 9:53) 'his face / expression was of one going') that 'as eyes are said to speak when they indicate what one wants to say, likewise the expression is said to go when it displays that a journey somewhere has been

place for him to be received in a certain Samaritan city where his journey lay. But when they got there, the citizens shut the city gates against them, because they concluded from their dress and appearance that they were going to Jerusalem. In fact, because the Samaritans worshipped on a mountain, they hated and cursed all who went to Jerusalem for religious purposes.[44] Now James and John, who had been sent ahead, saw the discourtesy of the citizens who had gone so far as to shut the gates; they said excitedly to the Lord, 'Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven as Elijah did, to burn them up?'[45] But to show how great the gentleness of a gospel teacher must be, Jesus checked their anger with a scolding, saying, 'Don't call on Elijah's action as a model for yourselves. He was led by a spirit and destroyed godless men of that time. But you do not yet understand to what spirit you belong. The gospel spirit is a gentler one. Someday there will be a time for vengeance, but for now the Son of Man has come not to destroy but to save souls.[46] Those who shut him out now may welcome him later on. So they are to be preserved so that there may be people who are able to repent.'[47] And leaving that town, they made their stopover in another small town. With these words Jesus removed from their hearts all desire for vengeance and taught mildness towards those who at first shut out gospel teaching, because

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settled on.' In the paraphrase just below Erasmus will add dress to appearance as an indication of the journey's destination.

44 See John 4:9 and 20.

45 The Elijah story is at 2 (Vulg 4) Kings 10–12. Erasmus' 'as Elijah did' is a legitimate paraphrastic addition in any case, but he had noted in the annotation *et consumat illos* (on 9:54) that the phrase had appeared in all his Greek texts and in Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 828C–D, though not in any of his ancient Latin texts. He allowed that it may have been added by an explicator. See Nestle-Aland on this verse and Fitzmyer AB Luke 830.

46 In modern texts of Luke, verse 55 ends after 'He scolded them.' In Erasmus' day and for some while thereafter it continued, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of,' and verse 56 began, 'For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them' (AV). In an annotation *non venit animas perdere sed servare* (on 9:56) Erasmus admitted the possibility that the 'Son of Man' clause was taken over from Matt 18:11 (also no longer in modern texts). See Nestle-Aland on verses 55–6 and on the Matthew passage; and Fitzmyer AB Luke 830. The paraphrase here, as well as the exegetical tradition, takes account of this fuller version.

47 The need to avoid vengeance and the possibility of later repentance are raised by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1793D, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 459E–460B (reading *in futuro* from CCL 120 212 instead of *in furore* in PL 92 460B), the *Gloss* (on 9:55–6) quoting Bede (with *in futuro*), Hugh of St Cher (on 9:56) 190V, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 9:55–6).

it is enough to leave them for the time being until at a more opportune time they are converted to a better point of view.

Another time during their journey it happened that a man spontaneously said to Jesus, 'I shall follow you wherever you go.' But Jesus wanted to show that people who did not bring hearts equal to the task were not to be admitted to a part in gospel activity; that it would be better not to undertake the task than to fail in it once begun. So he said to the man, 'Foxes have their dens in the earth and the birds of the sky have their nests in trees, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head. So one who has anything in this world in which he takes delight or in which he finds rest is not a fit follower of the Son of Man. For one who wants to follow me must renounce everything.[48] Again when he caught sight of another man, he said to him, 'Follow me.' But the man replied, 'Lord, permit me to bury my father first.' Then, implying that the business of salvation has to be put before all mortal duties, he said to the man, 'Let the dead bury their dead; as for you, come and proclaim the kingdom of God.' In this figure the Lord shut out the excuses of those who on the pretext of human obligation put off care and zeal for their eternal salvation.[49] Worse than these are the ones who, alleging domestic concerns, postpone and procrastinate in the task of salvation, which must be carried out promptly at the first opportunity. For another man ran up to him, who when bidden to follow him replied, 'I will follow you, Lord, but just let me say goodbye to my people at home.'[50] Then Jesus said, 'Whoever has once

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48 That this first of three would-be disciples is not ready to renounce everything else to follow Jesus is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1792D–1793A, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 661B–662A, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 829D–832A (who blames the man's desire for the monetary contributions he thinks Jesus gets from the crowd), Hugh of St Cher (on 9:57) 190v, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 9:57–62).

49 The second case is analysed as a person not (self-)deceiving about his intention like the first but not able to see clearly what good thing is more important, obligation to God and one's salvation or to a dead parent. See Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1795D–1796B, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 832A–B, Hugh of St Cher (on 9:59) 191r, the *Catena aurea* (on 9:59) citing Cyril, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 9:57–62).

50 The third case is of a person who for trivial reasons delays taking the important step of becoming a follower of Jesus. See Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 832C, the *Catena aurea* (on 9:61–2) citing Cyril, Hugh of St Cher (on 9:59–61 *mystice*) 191r, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 9:57–62).
'Say goodbye to my people at home' (*ut dicam vale domesticis meis*). In a *1516* annotation *renunciare his qui domi sunt* (on 9:61), revised in *1519* to *renunciare iis quae domi sunt*, Erasmus discussed two problems: whether the Greek τοῖς εἰς τὸν οἶκον 'those at home' were things or persons and so were to be translated by the Latin relative pronouns *quae* 'things which' or *qui* 'persons who', since the τοῖς

put his hand to the plow and then looked back is not fit for the kingdom of God. For this business is high and difficult to reach; and once someone tackles it, he must go forward with unremitting effort to more perfect things and not turn his heart to sordid cares about transient matters.'

Chapter 10

After this, then, our Lord Jesus picked out of the group of disciples seventy others also, as he had earlier chosen the twelve apostles.[1] He sent them two by two into every town into which he had decided to go, to prepare hearts for the coming of the Lord by their preaching, and he equipped them for the task

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could mean either (though his oldest Latin manuscript took it as persons, not things). The other problem is *renunciare* in the Latin text translating an infinitive of ἀποτάσσω. The Greek verb, he says, means 'give instructions and say goodbye to someone' and is often translated by *valefacere* or *valedicere* in the Vulgate (he cites 2 Cor 2:13 with Acts 20:1 and 18:18). The question is whether *renunciare* can mean that, for he finds that Latin authors tend to use it as 'report something that has happened' or 'protest against, renounce, recall.' His conclusion in the annotation is that a clearer translation is *valedicere* 'say goodbye,' as he has it in his *1516* NT and here. Edward Lee did not approve; Erasmus restated his own view in *Responsio ad annotationes Lei* Note 55 CWE 72 161.

1 Luke 10 begins with a doublet of the missionary enterprise reported at the beginning of chapter 9. For general discussion of Luke's possible sources and intentions here, see Fitzmyer AB Luke 841–50, with his review of the question whether there were seventy or seventy-two sent out (845–6). The Vulgate at 10:1 and 17, including the Neo-Vulgata printed in Nestle-Aland, has seventy-two, the number mentioned also by Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.14 PL 35 1339, *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.23 PL 34 1103–4, and *Sermones de scripturis* 101 PL 38 605; likewise Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 461C–D, the *Gloss* (on 10:1) summarizing Bede, and Hugh of St Cher (on 10:1) 191v. The number is seventy in Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1798A, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 665A, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 833A–D. Valla *Annot in Lucam* had commented here that as the seventy-two Greek translators of the Hebrew Bible were referred to as 'the Seventy' as a matter of convenience, so conversely the seventy here may have been expanded to seventy-two to establish a numerical relationship with the twelve tribes of Israel – needlessly, in Valla's view. The Greek manuscripts he knew all had only seventy, a number related to the seventy palm trees of Exod 15:27 (a passage also cited earlier in the tradition on this passage). Erasmus' annotation *et alios septuaginta duos* (on 10:1) follows both Valla and the 'seventy' tradition in detail, lengthening the discussion over the editions of his *Annotations*, and he printed 'seventy' in his NT at least through *1527*. Noël Béda disapproved; Erasmus defended his decision in the *Elenchus in censuras Bedae* LB IX 499C–D, *Supputatio* LB IX 613A–D, and *Declarationes* CWE 82 148–9.

of preaching the gospel as he had earlier equipped the twelve.[2] Moreover, he gave the reason why he had increased the number of preachers: 'The harvest is abundant,' he said, 'but the labourers are few. So ask the Lord of the harvest to push more workers out into his harvest.[3] Talk about the gospel is widespread, and more people are afire with eagerness for heavenly teaching. Hearts are ready; only missing are those people to gather in the mortals who are spontaneously rushing to the kingdom of heaven. So go, relying on my resources alone. The powerful and wicked will rage against your teaching; I am tossing you before them naked and unarmed. For I do not send you to harm anyone but to be diligent in doing good to everyone, like simple and harmless beings.[4] So do not look for human resources to arm yourselves against the violence of wicked men, and do not even be anxious about food and drink.[5] Go to the gospel task unencumbered, carrying no purse, no sack, no sandals.[6] Nowhere will you lack what is enough for nature's needs.

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2 See 9:1–2 and its paraphrase 246–8 for Jesus' earlier preparation of the twelve and their preparation of their listeners for Jesus' own preaching. Erasmus drops the 'and place' after 'town' in Luke's text.

3 'Push ... out' is *extrudere* 'thrust out, drive out,' translating ἐκβάλῃ 'cast out, thrust out.' In an annotation *ut mittat operarios* (on 10:2) Erasmus had explained that *extrudere* or *eicere* 'throw out,' rather than the Vulgate's *mittere* (Latin's most basic and colourless word for 'send'), would suggest the degree of effort or haste being used to get the unwilling to take up preaching. He had made the point already in his annotation *ut mittat operarios* (on Matt 9:38) and used *extrudere* in his NT and the paraphrase on that passage; see CWE 45 165 (translated 'thrust forth').

4 Erasmus drops any actual mention of sheep and wolves in paraphrasing 10:4 but explains the image. Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 10:3) had pointed out that Jesus did not mean 'I send you *just as* I send sheep' but 'I send you *as if* you were sheep' and suggested a change in the Latin conjunction to clarify the meaning.

5 For protection against violence, see the paraphrase on 9:3 with n4. The end of this sentence is possibly an allusion to Matt 6:28.

6 Erasmus has nothing here that corresponds to the end of 10:4 'and salute no one on the road.' That part of the passage was remarked on in the tradition: Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1802A–1803B, Augustine *Sermones de scripturis* PL 38 608, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 668A, Gregory the Great *Hom in evang* 17 PL 76 1140D–1141A, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 836B, Hugh of St Cher (on 10:4) 192r, and the *Catena aurea* (on 10:4) citing several of these and other authors. Erasmus is of course aware of the passage and uses it as an example of hyperbole in the *1519 Ratio*, Hajo Holborn and Annemarie Holborn *Desiderius Erasmus Ausgewählte Werke* (Munich 1933) 268. Cf his treatment of the hasty trip made by Mary to visit her cousin Elizabeth, reported in 1:39, 48 and the relevant part of the note there.

'And do not be anxious even about shelter. There will be people who will welcome you; only show yourselves pure and uncorrupted servants of gospel preaching. In whatever house you enter, first pray for peace on the whole household. And if there is a son of peace there, that is, a gentle person and one eager for mild teaching, your prayer will benefit him, and he will embrace a guest who wishes him well. If not, have no regret for your well-intentioned prayer. For you will not lose the reward for the service you offered.

'And there is no reason for you to beg anyone for hospitality or to impose yourselves shamelessly on anyone. So great a matter ought not be pushed on the unwilling, nor, on the other hand, is there anyone to whom it should not be offered. But whoever receives you freely and readily, stay in his house, not trying for a refined table but eating and drinking what they may have there as your body needs.[7] For it is reasonable that one who labours in the gospel's business should live on the generosity of those for whom he labours, if the wherewithal for him to live on is not available from some other source.[8] Likewise, be careful not to be moving from one house to another, as if you were turning up your nose at your earlier reception and seeking one more elegant and better fitted out. Let whatever you happen upon first be enough for you. But if it is your luck to enter towns, if the citizens welcome you, eat and drink whatever you are served without finickiness and with no sneering. And in order to be more welcome guests and to preach the kingdom of God with greater credibility, heal the sick of that town, restore the crippled and lame, release those possessed by demons. Do all this freely and readily, rejecting no one, neither poor nor rich. And then say to them, "You see the proofs of divine power; prepare your hearts for the pursuit of innocence. For now the kingdom of God is approaching you. Bodily illnesses are driven off; soon your sins, the diseases of your hearts, shall also be put to flight."

'But if you enter a town where there is no one to receive you, do not go around there soliciting hospitality, but go out into their squares and say, publicly and openly there, "At no cost we offered you the news of everlasting

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7 'What they may have there' is *quae apud illos fuerint*, an expression that (with the substitution of a subjunctive verb for an indicative one) is identical to the Vulgate's *quae apud illos sunt* 'what they have there.' Yet in the annotation *quae apud illos sunt* (on 10:7) Erasmus had remarked that the Greek τὰ παρ᾽αὐτῶν means rather 'what is from them,' ie 'what is offered by them,' because the Greek preposition παρά is used here with the genitive case αὐτῶν, not the dative. In his NT he said 'what is given by them' but here he maintains the Vulgate version.

8 Cf the remarks Erasmus puts in Luke's mouth in the paraphrase on 8:3, 232–3.

salvation, but since you spurn our service to you, we want no kindness from you. Look, we brush off against you even the dust that has clung to our feet as evidence of the blessed news we offered but you spurned – news that ought not be forced upon the unwilling. But you may be sure of this: whether you welcome it or not, the kingdom of God is very near you. If you welcome it, it will come and do you good; if not, it will come to your dismay."

'This is the vengeance with which you will be content wherever you are spurned. As for them, retribution will come in its own good time. For I assure you that on the day of the last judgment the citizens of Sodom will be more gently dealt with than will the city that spurned so much kindness from God when it was freely offered. Everyone is amazed at God's harsh punishment of the citizens of Sodom, but this point is in their favour, the fact that they had not been summoned to repentance in these many ways. Even the self-satisfied Jews curse the memory of those whom the wrath of God uprooted as a terrifying example. But a more terrifying punishment awaits the Jews themselves if, though summoned by so many kind deeds, so many miracles, they disregard and spurn the goodness of God.[9]

'Woe to you, Chorazin, woe to you, Bethsaida, cities of Israel! For if the miracles that have taken place in you had taken place in Tyre and Sidon, cities of the gentiles that you yourselves curse, they would have long since repented and, sitting in sackcloth and ashes, would be doing penance for their sins, while you now, in stiff-necked opposition to God, go on pleasing yourselves.[10] Woe to you as well, Capernaum, for swollen with pride in your wealth and abounding in luxuries, you think yourself lifted to heaven's height – on that day you will be hurled down to the depths of hell![11]

'Though you [disciples] are humble ambassadors, still, since you will go in my name and announce the priceless gift of God, the penalty for those who spurn you will not be light. Whoever heeds you heeds me, for I speak

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9 The Jews had the prophets and then the apostles, but no one had preached to Sodom (and Tyre and Sidon just below); as harsh as those cities' punishment had been, it was gentler than what will happen to Jews who reject Christ, according to Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1804A–B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 464A, the *Gloss* (on 10:12), Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 837B–C, Hugh of St Cher (on 10:12) 192V, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 10:12, cross-referencing his treatment of the parallel at Matt 11:34).

10 Verse 14, which almost exactly repeats verse 12 with the names of Tyre and Sidon replacing the name Sodom, is not separately paraphrased.

11 Erasmus had described Capernaum as a worldly, wealthy, and dissolute place in the paraphrase on 4:31, 153 and in the paraphrase on John 2:12 CWE 46 41.

through you; on the other hand, whoever spurns you spurns me. Likewise, whoever spurns me spurns the one who sent me. For I say nothing of my own that I have not received from the Father; neither will you say anything that you have not learned from me. Thus as my teaching is the Father's, not my own, so will your preaching be mine, not your own.' When they had been instructed by these words, our Lord Jesus sent the seventy out to make their trial at preaching the gospel.[12]

Then when the business had turned out amazingly well, they returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, not only are diseases driven out, but even demons are subject to us in your name.' But in order to fortify the hearts of his followers against the disease of vainglory, which has a way of sneaking up on even the saints, Jesus presented them with the example of Lucifer, who because of his pride had been suddenly hurled down from so much blessedness. 'I saw Satan,' he said, 'falling from heaven like a lightning bolt. His rank in heaven was remarkable, and yet, because of his heart's swollen pride, in an instant he was hurled down from the heights to the depths. How much more should you beware of pride, you who go about in mortal bodies and are subject to all kinds of dangers? It is a great power that I passed on to you, but I did so not for you to grow arrogant from it but so that through the miracles faith in the gospel might be won. I do not ask for the return of what I gave, only that you do not misuse it. For look, I give[13] you a power with which you can trample serpents and scorpions or anything else through which our enemy Satan can do harm. None of these shall harm you. Still, it does no good for you to boast because spirits are subject to you; such things will come about even through counterfeit believers.[14] Instead take joy in the fact that your names are enrolled in heaven. For your moderation and simplicity will raise

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12 That the gospel powers and teaching originate with the Father, not with Jesus or his disciples, is a prominent theme eg in John 5:19–20, 10:15 and 25–30, 14:10–11, 17:1–15.
For the number seventy, cf n1. Erasmus has a short annotation *reversi sunt autem septuaginta duo* (on 10:17) on the Greek manuscript reading here too.

13 'Look, I give' is *ecce do*; in an annotation *ecce dedi* 'I have given' (on 10:19) Erasmus pointed out that in his Greek texts the Greek verb was present, not perfect, tense.

14 'Counterfeit believers' is *reprobos*, a late Latin word used in that sense at 2 Tim 3:8; see L&S at *reprobus*. Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 50C–D notes that invokers of Jesus' or God's name can perform miracles even if they lack merit on their own account, either to cement their own condemnation or to benefit their listeners by persuading them to honour God; Jerome adds a list that includes Saul (1 Sam [Vulg 1 Kings] 10:2–16), Balaam (Numbers 22–3), and Judas before his betrayal of Jesus, since he was one of the twelve. Jerome is cited in part by

you to the place from which, because of his arrogance, Lucifer fell, if you are steadfast in what you have begun.'[15]

Having said this, the Lord then began to rejoice in the Holy Spirit and to give thanks to the Father for the success of the gospel.[16] In so doing he instructed us by his example that, if there is any happy result from our efforts, we are to rejoice not with human feelings but with spiritual joy, not claiming any portion of the glory for ourselves but rejoicing that the glory of God has been made to shine, and rejoicing in our neighbour's progress. 'I give thanks to you,' he said, 'Lord Father and creator of heaven and earth,[17] because

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Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 466A, the *Gloss* (on 10:20), and Nicholas of Lyra (on 10:30).

15 That Jesus' point here is to warn the disciples of the danger of repeating Satan's fate is noted by Gregory the Great *Moralia* 23 PL 76 259A (on Job 32:8), the *Gloss* (on 10:17), Hugh of St Cher (on 10:18) 193r, the *Catena aurea* (on 10:17) citing Gregory, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 10:18).

16 'In the Holy Spirit' (*spiritu sancto*). Here Erasmus maintains the Vulgate reading 'Holy Spirit,' though Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 10:21) had noted that 'holy' was not in his Greek texts but 'Jesus' was, a word a Latin translator mistakenly omitted or deformed into 'holy.' Erasmus repeated the information in the *1516* annotation *exultavit in Spiritu Sancto* (on 10:21), enlarged in *1519*.
'Give thanks' is *gratias agere* and *gratias ago* 'I give thanks' just below, a common and classical Latin expression. The Greek in 10:21 is ἐξομολογοῦμαι, translated in the Vulgate *confiteor* 'confess.' Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum* 38 (39) PG 57 429, commenting on Matt 11:25–7, had noted that the Greek word in one of its meanings is 'give thanks'; Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 77B–C said the same about the Latin word, though that meaning is confined to translations or adaptations of biblical Greek, as Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, et al *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford 1996) and L&S at those terms make clear. Jerome is echoed by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 466B, the *Gloss* (on 10:21), and the *Catena aurea* (on 10:21).

17 'Lord Father and creator of heaven and earth' (*domine pater et conditor coeli ac terrae*): *et conditor* 'and creator' is Erasmus' addition. The order *domine pater caeli et terrae* (instead of *pater domine*) appears in Hugh of St Cher's biblical text and lemma (on 10:21) 193v, in the biblical text of the 1498 edition of the *Gloss* used here, and in the Vulgate and Erasmus' own version in his *1527* NT. Commenting on Matt 11:25, Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum* PL 26 77C had said that Jesus there calls his Father the Lord of heaven and earth but not his Lord, thus demonstrating that he is a son, not a part of creation. Jerome is quoted by Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 466B. The interlinear *Gloss* (on 10:21) notes that 'father' modified by 'of heaven and earth' means creator, not father, and Hugh of St Cher just cited says that the expression literally means 'creator' of heaven and earth, citing Bede very succinctly. Erasmus' expansion seems intended to make clearer that the address is to one who is both the speaker's father and the creator of the material world.

you have hidden these sublimities from those who in the world's eyes are considered wise and sensible, and you have revealed them to little people, the humble, the uneducated, and those judged foolish in the world's view. Surely it has happened in this way, Father, because it suited your eternal plan to reject the haughty and to raise humankind to true sublimity through humility.[18] There is no authority that the Father has not given me so that you [all] might not fear the world in any way, being sure that you have a mighty Lord. For there is complete agreement and sharing in all things between the Father and me. In fact, no one entirely knows the Son, who he is and how great he is, except the Father who brought him into being; and no one knows who and how great the Father is except the Son who was begotten by him and anyone to whom the Son wishes to disclose it. But he does not disclose it except to the meek, the mild, and the believers.'

After this he turned to the disciples and congratulated them on the good fortune that, he said, had been denied even to highly placed men: 'Blessed are the eyes that see what you are seeing. For I assure you of this, that many prophets and kings have wanted to see what you humble folk are seeing, but they did not see it; and they wanted to hear what you are hearing, but they did not hear it. Recognize your good fortune but shun arrogance. Put on a holy pride in the face of all the things that this world marvels at as sublime, because they are scant and mean compared to what is bestowed on you.'

Then one day, when Jesus, in discussion with the Jews, had reduced the Sadducees to silence (for meaning to test him they had set him a question about a wife married to seven husbands: which one of them would have her as wife in the resurrection?), a scribe, an expert in the Law, came up to him as if to put a question on the basis of his close knowledge of the Law.[19]

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18 That humility or lowliness is the way to salvation is emphasized here by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1804B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 466B–D, the interlinear and marginal *Gloss* (on 10:21–2) restating Bede, and Hugh of St Cher (on 10:21) 193V (with his *expositio* of the whole chapter at 191V).

19 'Came up to him' (*accessit ad eum*). Erasmus uses the verb *accedere* 'to approach, come near.' The Vulgate verb is *surrexit*, from *surgere* 'rise up, get up' translating ἀνίστημι 'rise up, stand up, rise to speak.' Erasmus has no annotation on *surrexit*, and in his *1527* NT made no change to the verb. Hugh of St Cher (on 10:25) 194R noted that the man 'rose' *surrexit* either to be heard better or to appear righteous. The similarity of this episode, beginning with a lawyer's question and Jesus' counterquestion, to the narratives in Matt 22:23–34 and Mark 12:18–34, where two questions are put to Jesus, one from the Sadducees about the woman with seven consecutive husbands and one from the Pharisees about the great commandment, both of which Jesus answers directly, probably leads to Erasmus' mention of the seven-husbands question here. In fact the former

'Teacher,' he said, 'what is the chief commandment of God, in keeping which I would be able to achieve everlasting life?' Jesus replied, 'What you are asking me others ought to have learned from you; you certainly have professional knowledge of the Law. What is written in it? Or how do you read what is written there?' He answered, '"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, because he cannot be loved enough. And after him you shall love your neighbour as yourself."' Approving this answer, Jesus said, 'You grasp what is best; there is nothing else except that you put your understanding into practice. If you do that, you shall live; for it is not knowledge of the Law that gives life, but keeping it.'

The Pharisee was stung by this response from the Lord, because he did grasp the words of the Law though he did not practice the chief point in it. Since he was swollen with vainglory, he was unwilling to recognize his own flaw; but just as if he had already sufficiently fulfilled the commandment about loving God, he brought up the question about the neighbour, saying, 'Who is my neighbour?' — as if one who was harsh and hurtful towards his neighbour loved God. In fact the Jews generally understood the term 'neighbour' as referring to people of their own kind, thinking that they had a right to hate foreigners and not bestow any kindness on them.[20] So Jesus, knowing the man's heart, replied with a comparison of the following kind,[21] sketching the whole matter in a mystic representation and putting it before our eyes, and teaching that God's commandment about loving one's neighbour is not to be circumscribed in narrow definitions of blood kinship and race, but is to

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discussion is reported at 20:27–40; see the paraphrase on those verses CWE 48 166–9 with n39. That this episode concerning the great commandment in Luke is distinct from that of the pairs of questions in Matthew and Mark is argued by Augustine *De consensu evangelistarum* 2.13 PL 34 1146–7. For a modern discussion of the issue, see Fitzmyer AB Luke 877–9.

20 Citing the rules about not charging one's neighbour interest at Deut 23:19–20, Hugh of St Cher (on 10:30) 194v emphasizes that while in truth every person is one's neighbour, the Jews think no one is except another Jew.

21 'Replied' (*respondet*). The Vulgate text of Erasmus' day, including that in the biblical text of the 1498 *Gloss* used here, opened verse 30 with *suspiciens autem Iesus dixit* 'But Jesus looking up said.' Erasmus in an annotation *suspiciens autem Iesus* (on 10:30) repeated the substance of a comment by Valla *Annot in Lucam* on the same verse: the texts that had *suscipiens* 'taking up [the conversation],' ie 'in reply,' were preferable to those that had *suspiciens* 'looking up,' for *suscipiens* is an exact translation of the Greek ὑπολαβών and is similar to the Latin expression *excipiens*; not the translator but some ill-informed corrector was responsible for *suspiciens*. In his *1519* NT and thereafter Erasmus said *respondens* 'replying' instead of *suscipiens . . . dixit*; see ASD VI-5 537 417n. He maintains that view here.

be extended more widely to all humankind, although it often happens that, as regards our feeling for him, a person who is a neighbour by birth is more of a stranger than a foreign enemy.

'A certain man,' he said, 'setting out from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, who, not content to strip the poor fellow of his clothes, inflicted many wounds as well and left him in the road, half alive and likely to die there if no one came to his aid; and that done, off they went. But a priest happened to be travelling on the same road. Especially because of his religious profession, he ought to have put the commandment of God into practice. Nonetheless he, a Jew and a Jerusalemite, saw his fellow Jew and Jerusalemite stripped, injured, and half dead, and touched by no feeling of pity, passed on by. After this a Levite happened to be travelling the same way, a man from whom anyone would rightly have expected observance of God's commandment, because, being one dedicated to the temple, he regularly assisted at the sacred rites. And he too saw the wounded man and passed on by, and brought no aid to his brother and compatriot.

'After them it happened that a Samaritan journeying on that road saw him stripped and half alive, and wondering what the matter was, went closer; and when he understood the man's sad state, he was moved with pity for the Jew, though he himself was a Samaritan. For the Jews passionately detest the Samaritans.[22] And he not only felt pity, but disregarding the delay to his journey, went up to the man, poured wine and oil onto his wounds, and bound them up. Not content even with this service, he set him on his own beast and transported him to an inn, and there saw to his care with even more attention. Then, because his own journey's necessity was pressing, he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper,[23] to care for the wounded man just until the Samaritan completed his journey and came back; he said, "You have the money; take care of him at my expense. But if you spend anything beyond this sum, you won't be the loser; put it on my account for when I return, and I will pay back whatever you have spent."'

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22 See John 4:9 and 8:48; and in this Gospel cf 9:53 and the paraphrase on it, 263.

23 Erasmus omits any equivalent to 'on the next day' in verse 35. His word for 'inn' is *diversorium* and 'innkeeper' is *hospes meritorius*, replacing the Vulgate *stabulum* and *stabularius*. *Diversorium* (or *deversorium*) is normal Latin for a stopping place, lodging, or inn, to which one 'turns aside' from a journey to some more distant place. The adjective *meritorius* added to *hospes* 'host' indicates a profit or gain, someone earning pay, hence a paid host. In his NT Erasmus used *diversorium* and *hospes* and in the *1516* annotations *in stabulo* (on 10:34) and *et altero die* (on 10:35) explained that a proper inn, not a stable and stablehand, was meant by the language of the Vulgate.

With these words the Lord said to the lawyer, 'Which of these three seems to you to have been a neighbour to the man who had fallen among thieves?' The lawyer said, 'The one who took pity and came to the poor fellow's aid.' Jesus replied, 'Here too you have answered correctly. See to it that your life corresponds to your words, and that you choose to be more like the Samaritan than the priest or the Levite.'

In this parable our Lord Jesus reproached the arrogance of the Jews, who thought they loved God sufficiently because they went to his temple, made sacrificial offerings, carried his commandments around with them in the fringes of their garments, and always had 'God' and 'Lord' in their mouths, though God has no interest in worship of that kind but is more delighted by the hidden disposition of an honest and pure mind.[24] Furthermore, those who lived only for themselves and who resented the ones they should have aided were touched by no feeling of love for a neighbour. But if they provided any service, they did so only to people of their own kind, though every person should be a neighbour to any person whenever the need arises. The priest and the Levite were the wounded man's neighbours in race; but the Samaritan, in race his foe, was his neighbour in charity. Jewish religion differentiates the race; gospel godliness knows nothing of such differences, being eager to do good to all without distinction of persons.[25] Likewise the Lord himself came to save all people, sometimes being called by the Jews a Samaritan as a reproach; but the shame in that word is no stumbling block for all the nations of the world, since they have experience of the meaning of the name. For 'Samaritan' means 'guardian' in Syrian.[26] Certainly he was the true shepherd, who allowed not one of his own flock to perish, however sickly, broken, or inclined to wander, who

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24 Repetitious verbalization without heartfelt intention is charged against the Jews at several places in Scripture, eg 6:46, Isa 29:13, Jer 7:4, Ezek 33:31, Matt 7:21 and 15:8, Mark 7:6–7. For the commandments on the fringes of garments, see Num 15:37–41. That Jewish arrogance is Jesus' target is noted by Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1805A–B, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 468B–C, Hugh of St Cher (on 10:26–7 *mystice*) 194r, and a quotation from Cyril in the *Catena aurea* (on 10:28–9).

25 *personae delectu* 'distinction of persons,' in meaning though not quite in wording, echoes the language familiar from the Vulgate *personarum acceptor / acceptio* and AV 'respecter of persons' in eg Acts 10:34, Rom 2:11, and Eph 6:9.

26 'Guardian' (*custos*). This definition of 'Samaritan' is given by Origen (in Jerome's translation) *Hom in Lucam* 34 PL 26 317C, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1806B, Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis* CCL 72 142, and Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* PL 35 1340. 'Syrian' is Erasmus' term for Aramaic.

wanted all to become sharers in eternal salvation, which indeed was in him. It was the entire human race, stripped by Satan's malice of its garments of innocence, injured by every kind of vice, cast off, abandoned, half dead, and very near to desperation, that he, descending from heaven, saw fit to come and visit. And so that he might supply his aid more easily, he took on the nature of a human being and came quite close to humankind, seeing and being seen, hearing and being heard, touching and being touched; pitying our sad state, he took our sins on his own body, he paid from his own resources for what we had brought upon ourselves; and he, who had never turned away any sinner no matter how cast off or humble, effected our cure. In the meantime the proud priest passes by the dying man; the Levite pays no mind to the unhappy sufferer, not swerving from his path lest he take some loss in matters of this world while he goes to help a neighbour. But this Samaritan has his own innkeepers to whom, when he sets out for heaven, he entrusts an injured person to be cared for, promising repayment in heaven if out of the fullness of their love they spend beyond their instructions in healing the poor fellow. These, naturally, are the apostles and the successors to the apostles, through whom even today he cures the human race and gathers it away from the violence of robbers into the inn of the church, where the wounds of their sins are healed.[27]

Therefore, although according to gospel teaching even an enemy is to be loved, although according to the scribe's declaration even a Samaritan ought to be loved by a Jew if he has done a good deed, the Jews, who held fast in memory 'You shall love your God above all things, you shall love your neighbour just as yourself,' still broke both commandments in the one case of Christ; for they both hated God, whom they insulted, whose words they disbelieved, whose miracles they slanderously said were done by Beelzebub's power (for God the Father was in God the Son), and hated their neighbour, scheming destruction against him who was freely bringing

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27 The moral and mystical allegorization of the parable of the good Samaritan, equating the Samaritan with Christ, the inn and its keeper with the institutional church, and the wounded man with the individual human soul, follows a long tradition along the same lines. See Origen (in Jerome's translation) *Hom in Lucam* 34 PL 26 316B–318C, Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1806B–1807B, Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.19 PL 35 1340–1, Cyril *Expl in Lucam* PG 72 681B–684A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 468B–C, the *Gloss* (on 10:30–7), Hugh of St Cher (on 10:30–7 *mystice*) 194V–195R, the *Catena aurea* (on 10:30–5), excerpting many of these and others, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 10:34–6).

salvation for everyone.[28] Moreover, a person who in Christ loves both God above all things and also a most deserving fellow man as [he loves] himself has fulfilled both commandments. And Christ is loved in his members, in whom he is offended against, and afflicted with shame, and killed.

When Jesus had taught in this parable how greatly to be loved are those who, spending their time on gospel teaching, do nothing else but aim at learning from Jesus the salvific teaching that they share with everyone and who leave corporal services behind and spend all their time on services of the spirit, an incident took place through which this lesson too might be implanted in our spirits. In that way indeed the spirits of thickheaded and uneducated people are shaped more effectively.[29] For while Jesus was travelling on foot and at leisure from other matters, with the disciples who had left behind cares about earthly things and were spending their time on the gospel alone, he happened to come to a small town. There a woman named Martha received him hospitably.[30]

She had a sister named Mary. Each of them had equal devotion to the Lord but a different manner of living, a different practice of godliness, just

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28 For Jewish talk of Beelzebub in disparaging Jesus, see 11:15, Matt 12:24, Mark 3:22. The idea that Jews break both of the two great commandments in not believing in Jesus is a commonplace of the interpretations in the preceding note.

29 Three times in these two sentences Erasmus speaks of the *animus*, here translated 'spirit' though it is generally rendered in this translation as 'heart' or 'mind.' The word in Latin corresponds to a quality or set of qualities that can be expressed in English with any of these equally multivalent words and like them marks the aspect of personhood that motivates action (for good or ill).

30 As in the case of the good Samaritan, the story of Jesus' stop at the home of Martha and Mary receives a fairly uniform treatment in the exegetical tradition and in the paraphrase. The chief points are these: that Martha represents the active life in religion, devoted to meeting bodily needs of others, and Mary the contemplative life, absorbed in closeness to the divine and disregarding corporeal existence; and that these differences are not in opposition to one another – Martha is not rebuked – but stages, both of them good and necessary, in the soul's progress towards union with God. The first will end in any case, since physical life is finite, and the second will be the mode of eternal life, though it can begin while a person is still on this earth. See Ambrose *Expos in Lucam* PL 15 1809B–D, Augustine *Quaestiones evangeliorum* 2.18 PL 35 1339–40 (on fasting in joy) and *Sermones de scripturis* 103–4 PL 38 613–18, Gregory the Great *Hom in Ezech* 2.2 PL 76 953A–954A, Bede *In Lucam expos* PL 92 470D–472D quoting Gregory, the marginal and interlinear *Gloss* (on 10:38–42) reprising Bede, Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam* PG 123 852C–853C, Hugh of St Cher (on 10:38–42) 195v–196v quoting Bede and the *Gloss*, the *Catena aurea* (on 10:38–42) quoting Augustine and Gregory, and Nicholas of Lyra (on 10:38–42).

as in one physical body there are varieties of functions for its members and in the body of Jesus, which is the church, there are varieties of gifts of the Spirit.[31] For Mary, taking a holiday from household chores, sat at the feet of the Lord Jesus listening to his words; she was so enthralled[32] with them that forgetting all else she could not be torn away. Martha, on the other hand, anxious about preparations for the dinner, was scurrying back and forth with her hands full, much agitated lest anything be missing of all that was involved in making the Lord and his disciples agreeably welcome.[33] The same love for the Lord possessed each of them, but it did not allow Mary to be torn from his feet, and it drove Martha back and forth, not allowing her to stay close to the Lord. Thus the same devotion drove the two sisters, of one mind in loving Jesus, to different activities. But since Martha was barely up to handling everything involved in the preparations and saw her sister at rest, sitting at Jesus' feet, she did not protest to her sister, who she knew could not be torn away, but more or less blamed[34] Jesus for holding her back from what had to be done by talking with her. 'Lord,' she said, 'do you not care that my sister lets me do the serving work alone? So do tell her to help me; I know she will not be torn away from you in any other way, I'm sure, unless you tell her to help. The sweetness of your words is very great, but just now the dinner must be prepared, and I am not up to doing all of it myself.'

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31 For the theme of varieties of functions or parts of the body and of gifts of the Spirit in the church, see Rom 12:6–8 and 1 Cor 12:4–27. Erasmus takes up the theme again in the closing sentences of this chapter.

32 'Enthralled' (*rapiebatur*). See chapter 4 n3.

33 'Scurrying . . . much agitated' (*sursum ac deorsum cursitabat, tumultuabatur satagens*). Erasmus has tripled the Gospel's expression of Martha's activity, *satagebat* 'was distracted' (RSV). The phrase *sursum ac deorsum cursitare* occurs in Terence *Eunuchus* 277, where a servant of the villain describes with a sneer the behaviour of his antagonist's attendant. An instance of *cursitare*, not a very common verb, from another of Erasmus' favourite authors is in Horace *Satires* 2.6.107, the fable of the Town Mouse and Country Mouse: the Town Mouse seats his rustic guest on the humans' abandoned banquet table and scurries about (*cursitat*) serving up bits of the feast quite as if he were a house servant. The whole scene could lie behind Erasmus' description of Martha's effort to make the Lord *suaviter* 'agreeably' or even 'elegantly' welcome.
In an annotation *satagebat* (on 10:40) Erasmus had pointed out that the Greek being translated meant rather *distrahebatur* 'was distracted,' and that the point is the contrast with the 'one thing needful' (RSV) of verse 42. In his NT he used *distrahebatur*, which will also appear just below in the paraphrase on verse 41.

34 'More or less blamed' is *subincusat*, that is, *incusat* 'blamed,' with a prefix indicating 'to a slight degree'; see L&S at *sub* III.B.3. It is not a classical word.

Here the Lord, delighted by the love of both the women, did not rebuke Martha's earnestness or scold her for grumbling about her sister, but he did exonerate Mary. 'Martha, Martha,' he said, 'you are indeed tormented with concern about preparing the dinner, and you are much agitated and distracted about many things.[35] But there is one thing chiefly necessary that would have be done at all times, if that were possible. Carry on with your chores, whatever the dinner preparations are to be.[36] Mary has chosen by far the more important part,[37] for forgetful of what concerns the body, she is completely absorbed in things of the spirit. It is not fair, then, for her to be torn away from the excellence she has chosen and to be thrust into lesser services.

'Your devotion is pleasing to me, for it prepares a dinner for me and my followers, as our present situation requires, but I am more agreeably refreshed by those who convey my words into the bowels of their souls in order to be saved. For this is the food that above all else feeds me; this is the drink that above all else refreshes me. One who cares for the body's needs is distracted into many different cares, and there will be an end to these duties at the time when immortality appears and the needs that now torment the weakness of human nature will cease. But anyone who tosses away cares of this kind and is completely taken up with heavenly things takes a shortcut, focusing on a single object, yet one that by itself is more important than all the others. His happiness will not be torn away but increased when the imperfect is abolished and the perfect is revealed.

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35 'About many things' (*circa multa*). In an annotation *erga plurima* (on 10:41) Erasmus, like Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 10:41) before him, had noted that *circa multa* is a more accurate translation for περὶ πολλά than the superlative *plurima* 'very many things.'

36 In a *1527* annotation *porro unum est necessarium* (on 10:42) Erasmus would point out that at the historical level the Lord seems to reprove Martha not for preparing dinner but for making a meal that is too elaborate for nature's needs – Luke says Martha was busy περὶ πολλὴν διακονίαν 'with much serving' (RSV) – and invokes Theophylact in the passage cited in n30 for this view. The paraphrase on Martha's anxious preparations above and Jesus' polite indifference here to the refinements of the meal allow a similar interpretation.

37 'By far the more important part' (*partem long potiorem*). Valla *Annot in Lucam* (on 10:42) had noted that while the Vulgate says 'the best part,' the Greek says 'the good part.' Erasmus pursued the point in an annotation *optimam partem* (on 10:42), saying that in the Greek for 'the good part' the article 'the' suggests a rather better part, the specific part that is truly good. He pointed out that Augustine in his *Sermo* on this passage takes it as 'the better part,' as does Ambrose; see n30.

'And for the present there is no need to grumble at people as do-nothings if they have withdrawn from services to the body and on that account have time free for heavenly teaching, clinging fast to my footsteps, long learning what they may teach and conveying deep into the dispositions of their hearts what they may prescribe to others, so that they are able to benefit more souls in procuring eternal salvation. Yet at the same time, a reward will not be lacking for those who like you assist with godly zeal the bodily needs of those doing the gospel's business, who feed the hungry, clothe the naked, call on the sick, visit the imprisoned, give shelter to the homeless and those in need of a place to stay.[38] They too shall be sharers in the gospel's prize. But as in the body the eye does more by staying still than the hand does by busily serving a variety of functions, so those who are completely free for the things that most closely concern eternal salvation, though they seem to be resting from corporal duties, are still doing more because they are doing the thing that is chiefly necessary. And it is not fitting for the one kind to grumble about the other kind, since each serves me in my members in accordance with the gift he received from God.'

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38 Cf Matt 25:34–40.

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The indexes refer primarily to the translator's note and the footnotes. Cf xviii above. An index of all the names and theological terms in the paraphrase itself is beyond the scope of this volume.

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The Epistles

Romans	November 1517
Corinthians 1 and 2	February 1519
Galatians	May 1519
Timothy 1 and 2, Titus, Philemon	November / December 1519
Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians 1 and 2	January / February 1520
Peter 1 and 2, Jude	June / July 1520
James	December 1520
John 1–3, Hebrews	January 1521

Gospels and Acts

Matthew	March 1522
John	February 1523
Luke	August 1523
Mark	December 1523 / February 1524
Acts	February 1524

The Epistles were originally published by Dirk Martens in Louvain, except for Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, which were published by Michaël Hillen in Antwerp. The Gospels and Acts were all originally published by Johann Froben in Basel.

WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

This list provides bibliographical information for the publications referred to in short-title form in introductions and notes. For Erasmus' writings see the short-title list following.

Allen	P.S. Allen, H.M. Allen, and H.W. Garrod eds *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami* (Oxford 1906–58) 11 vols plus index
Ambrose *Expos in Lucam*	Ambrosii Mediolanensis episcopi *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam* PL 15 (Paris 1887) 1607–1944
ASD	*Opera omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami* (Amsterdam 1969–)
AV	*The Holy Bible . . . Authorized King James Version* (London [1611; repr 1969])
Bede *In Lucam expos*	Bedae *In Lucae evangelium expositio* PL 92 (Paris 1862) 301–634
Catena aurea	Thomae Aquinatis *Catena aurea in quatuor evangelia* ed A. Guarienti (Turin 1953) 2 vols
CCL	*Corpus christianorum, series Latina* (Turnhout 1953–)
Chrysostom *Hom in Matthaeum*	Joannis Chrysostomi *Homiliae in Matthaeum* PG 57 and 58 (Paris 1862) 21–472 and 21–794
CWE	Collected Works of Erasmus (Toronto 1974–)
Cyril *Expl in Lucam*	Cyrilli Alexandriae archiepiscopi *Explanatio in Lucae evangelium* PG 72 (Paris 1864) 475–950
DV	*The Holy Bible, Douay-Rheims Version*, rev Bishop Richard Challoner (1899; repr Rockford, IL 2000)
Ep	*Epistulae*
ERSY	*Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook*
Fitzmyer AB Luke	*The Gospel According to Luke (I–X)* ed and trans Joseph A. Fitzmyer SJ, The Anchor Bible 28–28A (New York 1985) 2 vols
Gloss	*Glossa ordinaria*, in *Biblia Latina, cum Glossa ordinaria Walafridi aliorumque et interlineari Anselmi . . . et cum postillis ac moralitatibus Nicolai de Lyra . . .* ed Sebastian Brant (Basel: Johann Froben et Johann Petri, 1498) V

Gregory the Great *Hom in evang*	Gregorii Magni XL *Homiliae in evangelia* PL 76 (Paris 1849) 1075–1312
Hugh of St Cher	Hugo de Sancto Charo *In evangelia . . . opus . . . in quo declarantur sensus omnes* (Venice 1732) VI
interlinear *Gloss*	See *Gloss*
Jerome *Comm in Matthaeum*	Eusebii Hieronymi *Commentarii in evangelium Matthaei* PL 26 (Paris 1884) 15–228
Jerome *De nominibus Hebraicis*	Hieronymi *Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum* CCL 72 ed P. Antin (Turnhout 1959) 57–161
LB	*Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami opera omnia* ed J. Leclerc (Leiden 1703–6); repr Hildesheim 1961) 10 vols
L&S	Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford 1962)
LXX	*Septuaginta, id est Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX interpretes* ed Alfred Rahlfs, 4th ed (Stuttgart 1950) 2 vols
Nestle-Aland	*Novum testamentum Graece et Latine*. Textum Graecum post Eberhard Nestle et Erwin Nestle communiter ediderunt Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce Metzger, Allen Wikgren; Textus Latinus Novae Vulgatae Bibliorum Sacrorum Editioni debetur; utriusque textus apparatum criticum recensuerunt et editionem novis curis elaboraverunt Kurt Aland et Barbara Aland una cum Instituto studiorum textus Novi Testamenti Monasteriensi (Westphalia) (Stuttgart 1984)
Nicholas of Lyra	See *Gloss*
NRSV	*The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments with the Apocryphal Deuterocanonical Books, New Revised Standard Version* (New York 1989)
ODCC	F.L. Cross *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* ed E.A. Livingstone 3rd ed (Oxford 1997)
Origen *Hom in Lucam*	*Translatio Homiliarum* XXXIX *Origenis in Evangelium Lucae* PL 26 (Paris 1884) 219–306
PG	*Patrologiae cursus completus . . . series Graeca* ed J.-P Migne (Paris 1857–86) 162 vols

PL	*Patrologiae cursus completus . . . series Latina* ed J.-P. Migne (Paris 1844–66) 221 vols
RSV	*The Holy Bible . . . Revised Standard Version* (New York 1952)
Theophylact *Enarr in Lucam*	Theophylacti archiepiscopi Bulgariae *Enarratio in evangelium Lucae* PG 123 (Paris 1864) 683–1126
Valla *Annot in Lucam*	Laurentii Vallensis *In evangelium Lucae Annotationes* in *Opera omnia* ed Eugenio Garin (Turin 1962) I 829–38
Vulg, Vulgate	*Bibliorum sacrorum iuxta vulgatam clementinam nova editio . . .* curavit Aloisius Gramatica (Vatican City 1946)
	Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem, editio tertia emendata ed Robertus Weber, Bonifatius Fischer, H.I. Frede Johannes Gribomont, H.F.D. Sparkes, W. Thiele (Stuttgart 1983) 2 vols

SHORT-TITLE FORMS FOR ERASMUS' WORKS

Titles following colons are longer versions of the short-titles, or are alternative titles. Items entirely enclosed in square brackets are of doubtful authorship. For abbreviations see Works Frequently Cited.

Acta: Acta Academiae Lovaniensis contra Lutherum *Opuscula* / CWE 71
Adagia: Adagiorum chiliades 1508, etc (Adagiorum collectanea for the primitive form, when required) LB II / ASD II-1–9 / CWE 30–6
Admonitio adversus mendacium: Admonitio adversus mendacium et obtrectationem LB X / CWE 78
Annotationes in Novum Testamentum LB VI / ASD VI-5–10 / CWE 51–60
Antibarbari LB X / ASD I-1 / CWE 23
Apologia ad annotationes Stunicae: Apologia respondens ad ea quae Iacobus Lopis Stunica taxaverat in prima duntaxat Novi Testamenti aeditione LB IX / ASD IX-2
Apologia ad Caranzam: Apologia ad Sanctium Caranzam, or Apologia de tribus locis, or Responsio ad annotationem Stunicae . . . a Sanctio Caranza defensam LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia ad Fabrum: Apologia ad Iacobum Fabrum Stapulensem LB IX / ASD IX-3 / CWE 83
Apologia ad prodromon Stunicae LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia ad Stunicae conclusiones LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia adversus monachos: Apologia adversus monachos quosdam Hispanos LB IX
Apologia adversus Petrum Sutorem: Apologia adversus debacchationes Petri Sutoris LB IX
Apologia adversus rhapsodias Alberti Pii: Apologia ad viginti et quattuor libros A. Pii LB IX / ASD IX-6 / CWE 84
Apologia adversus Stunicae Blasphemiae: Apologia adversus libellum Stunicae cui titulum fecit Blasphemiae et impietates Erasmi LB IX / ASD IX-8
Apologia contra Latomi dialogum: Apologia contra Iacobi Latomi dialogum de tribus linguis LB IX / CWE 71
Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo': Apologia palam refellens quorundam seditiosos clamores apud populum ac magnates quod in evangelio Ioannis verterit 'In principio erat sermo' (1520a); Apologia de 'In principio erat sermo' (1520b) LB IX / CWE 73
Apologia de laude matrimonii: Apologia pro declamatione de laude matrimonii LB IX / CWE 71
Apologia de loco 'Omnes quidem': Apologia de loco taxato in publica professione per Nicolaum Ecmondanum theologum et Carmelitanum Lovanii 'Omnes quidem resurgemus' LB IX / CWE 73
Apologia qua respondet invectivis Lei: Apologia qua respondet duabus invectivis Eduardi Lei *Opuscula* / ASD IX-4 / CWE 72
Apophthegmata LB IV / ASD IV-4 / CWE 37–8
Appendix de scriptis Clithovei LB IX / CWE 83
Appendix respondens ad Sutorem: Appendix respondens ad quaedam Antapologiae Petri Sutoris LB IX
Argumenta: Argumenta in omnes epistolas apostolicas nova (with Paraphrases)
Axiomata pro causa Lutheri: Axiomata pro causa Martini Lutheri *Opuscula* / CWE 71

Brevissima scholia: In Elenchum Alberti Pii brevissima scholia per eundem Erasmum Roterodamum ASD IX-6 / CWE 84

Carmina LB I, IV, V, VIII / ASD I-7 / CWE 85–6
Catalogus lucubrationum LB I / CWE 9 (Ep 1341A)
Ciceronianus: Dialogus Ciceronianus LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 28
Colloquia LB I / ASD I-3 / CWE 39–40
Compendium vitae Allen I / CWE 4
Conflictus: Conflictus Thaliae et Barbariei LB I / ASD I-8
[Consilium: Consilium cuiusdam ex animo cupientis esse consultum] *Opuscula* / CWE 71

De bello Turcico: Utilissima consultatio de bello Turcis inferendo, et obiter enarratus psalmus 28 LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 64
De civilitate: De civilitate morum puerilium LB I / ASD I-8 / CWE 25
Declamatio de morte LB IV
Declamatiuncula LB IV
Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas: Declarationes ad censuras Lutetiae vulgatas sub nomine facultatis theologiae Parisiensis LB IX / ASD IX-7 / CWE 82
De concordia: De sarcienda ecclesiae concordia, or De amabili ecclesiae concordia [on Psalm 83] LB V / ASD V-3 / CWE 65
De conscribendis epistolis LB I / ASD I-2 / CWE 25
De constructione: De constructione octo partium orationis, or Syntaxis LB I / ASD I-4
De contemptu mundi: Epistola de contemptu mundi LB V / ASD V-1 / CWE 66
De copia: De duplici copia verborum ac rerum LB I / ASD I-6 / CWE 24
De esu carnium: Epistola apologetica ad Christophorum episcopum Basiliensem de interdicto esu carnium (published with scholia in a 1532 edition but not in the 1540 Opera) LB IX / ASD IX-1 / CWE 73
De immensa Dei misericordia: Concio de immensa Dei misericordia LB V / ASD V-7 / CWE 70
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